




Issue number 16 JANUARY

PUNK PLANET FEBRUARY

1997



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 the mysteries of
ZINE DISTRIBUTION
revealed!

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Columns
Reviews
Fiction
More

WHO IS THE PUNKEST PLAYER ON EVERY NBA TEAM?
find out inside!

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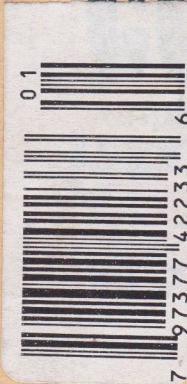
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Culture Jamming • Punk Planet's NBA Picks

THE INTRO

Life in the Dead of Winter

Winter has always been the best time of year. For those of you that live in places that don't have it, you're missing out. Sub-zero temperatures, blizzards, frozen pipes, mindbending heating bills, baby, it's all good. This winter—and this winter issue—is extra special for those of us at Punk Planet. This issue will be our last self distributed issue.

Yes, after two and a half years of having to dance the distribution dance, we're throwing in the towel. Starting with the next issue, all of Punk Planet's distribution will be handled by the fine folks at Mordam Distribution.

This means a number of things for us. One, it means that Dan doesn't have to beat his head against the wall every day trying to chase down payments from 150 different distributors. But you don't really care about that, do you (if you do, you can read Dan's 8 page tell-all DIY files on how to get your zine distributed in this issue).

What you should care about is that with Mordam covering our distribution, we're going to be able to focus more on the content of the magazine, instead of expending all our energy on trying to get it into your hands. What that means is that in the coming months we are going to be doing some radical restructuring with how the magazine works as well as what's in it.

The first step is complete. As you can see from the information to the right of this editorial, we're now paying for our content. That means that the quality of the writing in Punk Planet, while already pretty good, will only get better. Plus, if you've got what it takes, your pockets could be getting a little fuller.

Anyway, that's enough business talk for now. As always, we hope you enjoy issue number 16 of Punk Planet. If you don't, we urge you to make your own zine... In fact, you should be making your own zine anyway!

Your friends at PP

MAKE MONEY THE EASY WAY

Yep, you read that right. Starting now, Punk Planet will be paying for all its content. That also means that we're going to be super choosy, but give it a shot, you need the money, doncha? For more information on how this process is going to work, find the full-page info sheet in this issue. Or call us at (773) 227-6114

Interviews

We like all kinds of interviews, with all kinds of people. Just 'cause someone's not in a band (or may not even be 'punk') doesn't mean they're not interesting. Above all else, make the interview interesting. An interesting interview with someone no one's ever heard of is going to run over a really boring interview with Rancid.

Fiction

We usually print one piece of fiction per issue, so sometimes there's a wait before you see yours printed. It can't be too long either... There's a thing called 'short stories' go for it.

Articles

Articles are the best! They're also the hardest to write, but you can do it! Articles are researched, well written, and goddamnit, relevant! Take a chance, do something wild!

DIY

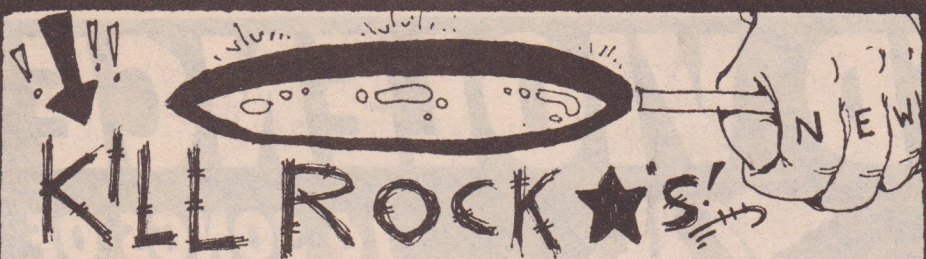
You can always help us out by writing up a DIY file. Basically, if you know how to do something & can explain it well, type it on up & send it in. DIY files have ranged from auto maintenance, to touring, to guitar buying, and all points in between.

Everything else

As far as reviews & columns go: we don't need anymore!! We have a ton of columnists & more reviewers than can fit in a mid-sized apartment! Please, don't send us columns, as you're pretty much assured they won't run.

All submissions should be typed, and preferably put on a 3 1/2" disk, either Mac or IBM. Just 'cause you send something in doesn't mean it's going to get printed, and certainly doesn't mean you're gonna get paid.

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-thirtysecondsdeep "Hot Carl" 7"
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-The Bollweevils/Walker split 7"
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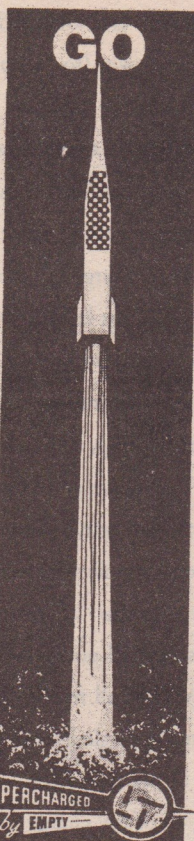
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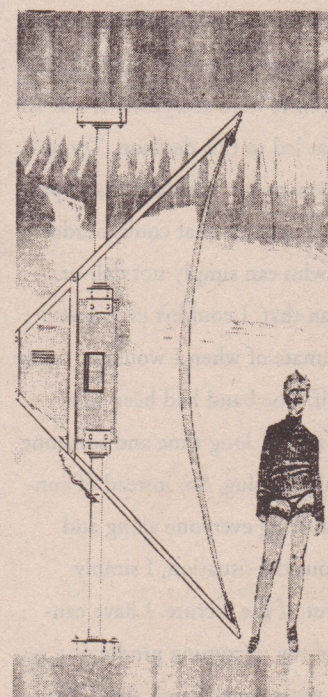
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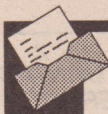
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To Everyone,

On Monday, July 15th, 1996, the VINDICTIVES officially disbanded due to my inability to recover from a number of symptoms and illnesses that have occurred over the past 2 1/2 years. This decision was very difficult to come to since I genuinely loved what we did; however it was by this same token that I had to let it go. I didn't vent to force out something that wasn't coming natural and destroy the sincerity of our already existing body of work. We had a few albums' worth of new material already written and the band (minus me) practiced 4 times per week, religiously. Fans continue to write shitloads of fan mail and LOOKOUT!! continued to have faith in us never poking, prodding or pressuring us to "deliver some more product to market", respect by all involved remained and never wavered, hand-decorated get-well notes little toys, baubles, zines & music have been consistent and gratefully received, and there were even offers by promoter. to arrange benefit shows to help cover medical expenses (none were accepted). It was all of that that led to this decision. Try to imagine how many "expectations to perform" types of stress that could burden someone who can simply not deliver. Worse than that, I couldn't even give a rough estimate of when I would be active again, or if. The band had been in a coma for a long, long time and someone had to pull the plug. So, instead of continuing to string everyone along and obsess about the situation, I simply stepped out of the picture. I have canceled all of my upcoming production sessions (in most cases, bands that I was really looking forward to working with).

Johnny Personality and Jenny Gee are continuing VML Records on their own, (to be honest they have been carrying the majority of the weight for quite some time now, anyway), and I've demoted myself to occasional record stuffing and bullshitting with members of other bands. Jenny is now solely in charge of "the store" DUMMYROOM. She has hired some help and is doing fair for a little punk rock mom 4 pop shop going on its third year anniversary And as of this writing, I have no idea where the FLIM- FLAMS are gonna go, but wherever it is, I won't be tagging along, unfortunately This move slowly and reluctantly came about only after a number of trusted friends and professionals insisted persistently that I unencumbered myself of all responsibility except for focusing on the single goal of following through with all of my treatment modalities and devoting all of my energy towards a complete recovery, which has now become my agenda. In order to clear up some misconceptions and confusion as to just what the hell is going on with me, I'll first say that these rumors are wildly untrue. I do not have cancer AIDS nor am I recovering from overdose and withdrawal of heroin, (though I am entertaining the option of taking it up as a hobby).

Now comes a confused mess. I'll try to be brief) of what really has been going on with me health-wise. In no particular order. For (15) years I have suffered from panic disorder and (on-and-off) agoraphobia. This led to a physical and mental addiction to the pharmaceutical drug XANAX. I've attempted to wean off this med (since it doesn't cure, but only makes you feel sort of dull and foggy), but I've only managed to get down to half of my original dosage since this shit is extremely addictive and the withdrawal is hellish. I have a clinical, Depressive illness for which I was hospitalized. This is not to be confused with feeling bummed-out or having the blues, this is the blacks. This is sitting on the floor in the pitch

dark of your bedroom at 4 a.m. with a cocked and loaded .357 magnum stuffed in your mouth just in case the pain continues to increase. They really do treat you like the patients in the film One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest. For this nasty little malady I was unsuccessfully treated with just about every family of anti-depressant drugs, when they finally prescribed the big daddy of 'em all, PROZAC. My adventures on PROZAC include a much deeper despair than even I ever thought possible: the desire to kill just about everyone, a weight gain of over 100 pounds in less than (6) months, bi-lateral gynecomastia with fibrocystic lumps or "tits with tiny tumors" and finally, intermittent narcoleptic seizures, (falling asleep suddenly and uncontrollably). Well, this happened to me on several occasions most of them kinda funny. eg: Jenny and I were at a movie theater when I fell asleep in the middle of the picture and began to snore very, very loudly. The audience was laughing so hard they nearly placed themselves (according to a mortified Jenny). But one time something happened that wasn't so funny, check this out. I was booking shows at a club right next door to DUMMYROOM, (quite successfully for a while until this happened). I don't remember who was playing that night, but I was driving there when I had an I.N.S. According to witnesses I was really flying, so I guess while I was sawing logs I was simultaneously putting the proverbial "pedal to the metal", due to the limp leg connected to my far overweight girth. Going westbound on Grand Avenue right after Harlem, roughly (2) blocks down there is a really wide curve, which didn't concern me at all since I probably had already reached REM sleep. This curve is so wide that were you to drive completely straight, which I was, it almost becomes a North-South street of parked vehicles. I don't remember too much after the collision with the pseudo-mobster guys' 2-day old white Lincoln Continental Town Car

except opening up my glass-filled eyes, I wasn't wearing a seat-belt, so my face sort of went through the windshield) and catching a glimpse of myself in the rearview mirror and thinking I look like Carrie out of the movie Carrie after the jock/preppies dump the bucket of pig blood over her head during the prom. Since then I've lost my fear of death, thanks to the massive amount of endorphins that were probably rippling through my body at the time. I ended up with 12) head gashes, a broken nose, chipped teeth, bowed spine and neck, broken ribs, and a bruised, swollen brain from when the soft little bit of gray matter smashed against the inners of my cranium. It took over (6) hours to remove all of the glass from my face and eyes. I spent the next (8) weeks in bed gobbling pain killers and having hallucinogenic migraines, waiting for the swelling to go down.

During this time I developed severe esophogitis which means that my stomach acids were literally eating away my throat and vocal chords, from nerves and lying prostrate for such a long period of time. This is the last thing a singer wants to happen. It did. Shortly after that, not used to maneuvering my newly unwelcome 260 pound body, I broke my foot, ankle and another rib on the ice, so it was crutches and back in bed for me. How many people know what chronic atypical insomnia is? Well, you guessed. I got it, too. For the uninitiated I'll try to describe it. Imagine a drag race, (packed stands, screaming audience and all) going on 24-hours-a-day somewhere in your head, ever since you can remember. Mild at first with long periods of complete remission but now worse than ever and continuously exacerbating in severity. Soon I will be admitted into the hospital for a Sleep Disorder Study. Over the past 2-3 years, if I sleep (10) hours weekly, it is a good week. Lately, it's not even that. Sleep deprivation to this degree is very serious and sometimes fatal. Talk about walking around in a daze, huh?

Anyway, I am going through with it even though it seems futile. My psychiatrist says "this test will determine exactly which type of sleep dysfunction you are suffering from so we can prescribe appropriate treatment for your illness". Translated that means, if you grin and bear it, they will prescribe some more pharmaceuticals, (that I can't afford), (even though this is the same son of a bitch who has repeatedly told me that I cannot take sleeping pills along with the present medications), that might let me sleep. Go figure. And now for the grand finale, all during and a little bit before this period of decline began I continued to develop repeated bronchial infection; This turned into double-pneumonia (3) times and single lung pneumonia twice. When you have this, you also have a persistent barking, wheezing, hacking cough to accompany it, (sorta sounds like the aftermath of a coal miner who smoked (S) packs of unfiltered Camels very day for many years). It feels like your lungs are on fire. Also, as you can probably figure out, this wreaks quite a bit of havoc on the pipes as well. Like I said before, not a good thing to happen to a singer. Well, as you have probably figured out by now, this is not nearly the end but merely the beginning.

By now I was able to tell when another bronchitis, pneumonia, whatever, was about to come on. I figured I'd head it off at the pass. So I went to a "specialist". He discovered that I had a bacterial infection in my blood that originates from a solid bacterial mass located in my completely consumed rear phenoid sinus. This is located about 1/4 inch from the brains' frontal lobe, separated only by an extremely thin, porous, fleshy piece of epidermal tissue. I was also told that given no treatment, the sinus would eventually burst and enter the brain through the fragile little wall separator. I was given two options: 1) gobble several types of antibiotics for 10 weeks and undergo a surgical procedure that entailed drilling a hole up through my palate and

removing the mass, or 2) gobbling several types of antibiotics for (10) weeks and having a picline (thin, long plastic tube) inserted into my artery (via my arm) that would lead to the inside of my heart and stay there for B-10 weeks so I could wake up at 6 am every morning, drive down to the hospital (courtesy of Jenny) and receive an IV infusion of Cleocin and Rocephine (big artillery used to combat AIDS, cancer, etc.) clocking in at around (2) hours with blood thinner injection and redressing the incision in my arm from which emerged the little reservoir used to shoot me up daily. Then, returning to 10 more weeks of oral meds again to "make sure everything was all cleared up". Well, I chose the latter obviously, since the idea of having a drill boring a hole through the roof of my mouth was less than appealing. During the insertion procedure the fuck-ups accidentally scraped the inside of my heart, causing it to go into arrhythmia. It was like a bad t.v show with the doctors yelling at me "C'mon Joe, stay with us!" "calm down" and "relax!" while the nurse is inches from my face smacking me and authoritatively ordering me to concentrate on her eyes. Luckily, she wasn't hard to look at or had bad breath. I can't really remember much after that. Now that the entire procedure is over I'm worse off in a way because even though the bacterial infection was killed, the meds I took to kill it unfortunately wiped out the good bacterial and fungi that help to make up the immune system. So for the past (9) months I've been mostly bed-ridden, getting out only occasionally since it takes such great effort to put on the happy face, walk down the stairs and climb into the van. I'm lucky if I can attend shows, never mind perform in one. If you use your imagination you can probably come

up with endless configurations of how all of this shit weaves together creating newer and more complicated problems that continue to make things worse and prevent recovery. And that's why Joey quit the VINDICTIVES. so now when someone comes up to you and tells you the one about how I won the lotto and flipped out from blowing all of my riches on hookers and mainlining coke, you'll know better. This is the story straight from the horses' mouth. The only reason I even bothered to go into so much detail is because 1) I'm sick of answering the same questions over again and again. 2) Discourage stupid rumors and 3) since so many people showed their concern towards the band and my health I felt I owed some sort of an explanation. After all, if we had no fans we'd have had no band. So, we died young (6 1/2 years) and left a pretty good-looking corpse. I feel o.k about that. We wanted to do so much more but it just wasn't in the picture. Now there's nothing left to do except roll with the punches. The other VINDICTIVES will probably be popping up in new bands and I wish them all of the fun and success in the world. we've all remained friends and that's an oddity when it comes to bands breaking up.

As for me, I'm concentrating on my health and learning to play guitar left-handed, (since that's my dominant hand), after playing right-handed for 12) years. I hope to be able to form another band when I get well. I'm not sure what genre it will fall into since I like so many type. of music. So if you were a big fan of the VINDICTIVES, don't make a hasty purchase just cause it has my name on it, it may be something *o far removed from the VINDICTIVES that you'll consider it garbage. so don't say I didn't warn you in advance. As of a few weeks ago I've pretty much abandoned all of my contemporary hippocrates oriented doctors and have been receiving treatments based on the philosophy of holism. Acupuncture, herbology, Reikki,

Maxiobustion and Qi Gung are what I am practicing now and my feelings thus far are that this is the right direction for me. I hope I'm right. Wish me a little luck. So, thanks for your support and encouragement over the years. It was fun while it lasted.

Joey Vindictive
P.o Box 183
Franklin Pk, IL 60131



oh boy! More Animals!

Dear Punk Planet,

I don't know if it is worth continuing the argument but I would like to respond to the letters that Alison Fair and Rick Slama wrote in response to my previous letter. First of all I did not attempt to dictate anyone's moral obligations or even put forth a fully realized argument for animal rights. My intent was only to point out parts of Darren's column that I felt were wrong. I never said that plants do not feel pain, but absolutely nothing has been "proven" to feel pain as Darren claimed. I feel that Alison unjustly lumped my points in with Nate's letter. I'm not sure if plants feel pain or not and I do think that their "interests" are important to some extent. While I found some of Alison's ideas interesting I still feel that non-human animals are incapable of morality. Rick proves this point in his argument against me by writing, "Animals are not made to eat vegetation. For them it is either eat meat or die. The choice is obvious." If a being can not make a choice then it cannot act on any form of morality. In most cases, a human is capable of making choices and therefore can possibly base a choice on moral principle. Rick should also realize that going vegetarian does help the planet. Cattle ranching is a devastating industry. It is responsible to some extent for the deforestation of rain forests, -more water pollution than any other human activity, and global warming. It is estimated that livestock produc-

tion accounts for twice as much pollution as that produced by industrial sources. The world's petroleum reserves would be gone in just 1 3 years if every country used the technological methods used in the U.S. to produce our meat- centered diet. I don't want my arguments to come across as self- righteous but I have an opinion and I attempt to back it up.

Sincerely,

Matt Reed
PO Box 163927
Columbus OH 43216



alright! More Animals!

Hey,

Thanks a lot for promoting the animal rights debate in the last couple of issues. I wrote a letter in PP #14 which offered a critique of Darren Cahr's column in which he attempted to justify meat eating on moral grounds. Two letters in PP #15 disagreed with me, and I would like to refute their arguments.

On the whole, most of the "arguments" that Alison Fair and Rick Slama made were only assertions, and I fail to see any coherent, consistent case for eating meat made by either of them—they are just trying to conjure up some lame excuse to brutalize and exploit animals for their flesh.

Alison Fair says, "Plants do not have animal nervous systems. But if you refuse to accept the mere possibility that this is not the only possible way to 'feel', you are being close-minded, if only in that respect." As Peter Singer explains in *Animal Liberation*: "Nothing resembling a central nervous system has been found in plants; and it is difficult to imagine why species that are incapable of moving away from a source of pain or using the perception of pain to avoid death in any other way should have evolved the capacity to feel pain. Therefore the belief that plants can

feel pain appears to be quite unjustified." A while back, a popular book, *The Secret Life of Plants*, argued that plants have many remarkable abilities like Allison Fair mentioned, but the research was not taken seriously and the book has since been totally discredited.

Look, we know animals can feel pain, and we are basically positive that plants cannot. For example, I'm not sure that my friends want to live, but it doesn't make sense for me to kill them just because I'm not 100% sure—we need to make certain logical assumptions, even if they are only 99.9% provable. Doesn't it make more sense to go with what we know, and minimize animal suffering?

Also, it takes 20 pounds of grains to produce one pound of meat. Therefore, even if plants could feel pain, the pain of eating plants directly would be 1/20th of the pain caused by eating animals, not to mention the immense suffering that factory farm animals are subjected to. Therefore, either way, eating animals is many times worse. The meat, eggs, and dairy products sold in supermarkets are the result of slave-like confinement, castration, face branding and bodily mutilation (no pain-killers of course), and countless other forms of exploitation. We should not ask ourselves, "Is it right to eat meat?" as much as "Is it right to eat this meat?"

Rick says, "The fact that when plants are pruned they grow less seems to show that plants feel pain, just like the fact that kids not doing something after they are spanked for doing it shows that they feel pain." No offense, Rick, but are you stupid? Are you really arguing that plants make a conscious decision not to grow? Kids possess the ability to reason; you're going to have a tough time showing that plants are also rational beings!

Rick also makes the brilliant observation that "who's to say that when you smack a cow on the ass, it's flinching isn't automatic?" In the 1500's, "scientists" nailed cats and dogs to boards without painkillers, and dis-

sected them while they were still alive. They figured that animals could not feel pain—Rick, would you say these actions are morally justifiable?

Our buddy Rick further suggests that animal liberation activists should focus on saving lab rats, not farm animals. What the fuck's the difference? If I am opposed to unnecessary cruelty and outright brutality, I'm not going to be a living grave for the same animals that I care about.

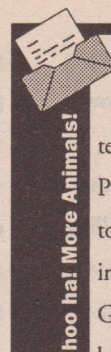
Furthermore, the same arguments that attempt to justify murdering animals (i.e. "it's natural") have been used to subject women, justify slavery, and oppress homosexuals. I'm not the only one who understands that all of these things come as a package. Alison keeps reminding me that not all humans have the same moral convictions. However, I don't think there is much question that killing and causing totally unnecessary suffering are wrong.

As a final point, Alison argues that A.L.F. activities such as smashing fur salons are wrong. You put a lot of faith in the law and our government to do the right thing, Alison. If you are opposed to civil disobedience, was Rosa Parks wrong in refusing to give up her seat on the bus to a white man? How do you expect to correct this shitty system while maintaining a blind patriotic alliance to law? You're such a punk!

If you are considering giving up meat or going vegan, I bet you would find *Animal Liberation* by Peter Singer to be amazing. If you want to blow two bucks for a copy of my animal liberation zine *Don't Have A Cow!*, my address is Box 71, Manchester, MA 01944. If you agree with what I'm saying or want to beat the shit out of me, my e-mail is neverett@emerald.tufts.edu.

Thanks,

Nate Everett



Planeteers,

I just finished reading the letters section in issue fifteen of *Punk Planet* and felt that I needed to respond to the editorials regarding vegetarianism/veganism. Granted, this is a topic that has been discussed to the point where

one more opinion probably won't matter, but what the hell...

First off, I am vegan. Three years ago I was a big meat eater who outspokenly denounced the vegetarian lifestyle. Much like the homophobe who bashes gays to cover up his own sexual uncertainty, I attacked vegetarianism because deep down inside I knew that it was a better lifestyle. In fact, many of the arguments I used to justify my diet were mentioned in the letters you published. However, the more I learned on the subject, the harder it became to be ambivalent to the consumption of meat and dairy.

Life isn't vegan, folks. Let's face it, everything we do affects our environment. Everything from glue to Xerox copies contains animal products. Every time we drive, build homes, pave roads, or mow the lawn we inadvertently kill living organisms. Even breathing kills bacteria. But this doesn't mean we shouldn't try and minimize the suffering we induce on other living things. The subject of plants feeling pain seems to have been a big topic in the letters. Do they feel pain? I don't know. But we have to eat to stay alive; and if I have to decide between eating something that screams, whines, or thrashes around in agony as it is dying and something that shows no visible signs of suffering when it is consumed, I'll pick the latter. And as far as dairy products are concerned, cramming a machine into the vaginal orifice of a cow and injecting it with semen so that it

will become pregnant and eventually lactate seems much more like rape than plucking fruit from a tree.

I've heard quite a few people argue that if lions and tigers don't feel remorse for killing their prey, why should we? Well, last time I checked, lions didn't keep their prey locked in a 4' by 6' cell where they were fed sawdust, sewage, and shredded paper, injected with hormones, forced to wallow in their own filth, and never allowed to see sunlight. Lions don't rely on getting their meat in a nice, sealed package from a sterile white grocery store. They have to actually go out and kill the thing for themselves. How many people do you know that have a strong enough stomach to kill a cow with their own hands? And yeah, if I was stranded in the mountains and I was starving, I might actually kill and eat an animal. It sucks that it has to be that way, but that's life. At least that animal had a fighting chance.

Morality aside, there are other reasons to go vegan. Our bodies aren't suited for meat and dairy. Ever wonder why meat causes cancer, heart disease, kidney failure, high blood pressure, strokes and diabetes? If we are meant to consume dairy products, why are more and more people becoming lactose intolerant, and why is osteoporosis so prevalent (drinking milk to strengthen bones? too bad the thick and acidic animal proteins leach calcium off the bones)? And isn't it strange that vegan diets decrease the pain and swelling of arthritis, clear the skin of Eczema patients, and help asthma patients breathe easier? We don't have the body structure and digestive system designed for consuming meat and dairy. Plain and simple.

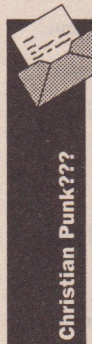
Let's not forget the environment. Two thousand and five hundred gallons of water are needed to make one pound of meat. A pound of wheat requires 25 gallons. Also, the meat industry pollutes more water than all cities and industries combined. Sixty calories of petroleum energy go into the production of one calorie of animal flesh. One calorie of

petroleum fuel will yield twenty calories in grains and legumes. Twenty one pounds of vegetable protein must be fed to cows to produce one pound of animal protein. If everyone cut their meat intake by ten percent, the 12 million tons of grain saved from animal consumption would feed sixty million people. And every vegan saves an acre of trees that would otherwise be converted into grazing land for cattle.

Hopefully this information will help convince people that vegetarianism/veganism is not the pointless, hypocritical lifestyle that certain meat eaters try to make it out to be. I realize that people can be pretty set in their ways and that they will often find some weak excuse or pathetic argument that will allow them to continue their destructive habits in good conscience. I can only hope that these words will at least make people think twice before they sit down to their next meal.

Thanks for your time.

Brian Cook
Tacoma, WA



Punk Planet

I would like to respond to the Comments made by Mark Hanford in his review of the Ghoti Hook-Sumo Surprise CD in issue #15 of Punk Planet. Punk is about questioning the status quo, and it is also about standing apart, being an individual, and not blindly following what's popular. In a scene like punk (and a world like this) does Christianity not do this? When everyone says, "Screw morality. Screw Christianity," is it not revolutionary to do the opposite? Christians do think for themselves. You can see this illustrated in the 1,000's of different interpretations of the Bible that there are. I am a Christian and a punk who has been playing/listening to punk rock in all its

various forms for years. Christian punks and Christian punk rock are completely valid and real parts of the punk scene/movement/genre/whatever I am not connected with Tooth and Nail Records in any way, nor have I heard anything by Ghoti Hook. I am not defending their label or music, but Christianity and Christian punks in general. We are not herd animals. I know a lot of non-Christian punks who are more closed-minded and bigoted than the supposed "Christian drones" that they are supposed to be fighting. Christianity and punk are not mutually exclusive.

Lukas Myhan



Punk Planet/Darren Cahr:

The Darren Cahr "Strange Attractions" column of #15 is one of the best columns your mag has printed—it succinctly and intelligently poses an important question—tho I'm sure some might say it's obvious and unimportant when compared to, say, endless letter column debates about veganism/vegetarianism/selloutstwhatever—for the Punk scene to consider. It also manages to dodge pretentiousness (which ain't a sin when it's sincere, but often proves headache-inducing when someone you're trying to agree with says something that comes off snobbish & humorless) better than some of the (pre-Punk) Situationist writings that deal with the "false unity" in the "society of the spectacle": summed up in the line, "We have nothing in common but the illusion of being together," written by, before Cringer or Thatcher on Acid, Raoul Vaneigem in *The Revolution Of Everyday Life*, a seminal critique on the overwhelming fuckedupedness of capitalist/consumerist society in which folks are encouraged to passively consume (tv, sports, pop music, church, etc) and given superficial chances to "interact" (call-in votes

on tv, doing the wave at the big game, voting, letter columns[?])... the question is: Does Punk follow this trend of entertainer/entertained, producer/consumer, etc.??

That's not just a question, it's a demand that Punk blur these boundaries more than ever—of course, the DiY ethic of Punk has from the beginning motivated writers who “can't write” to scrawl, graffiti, and type their asses off, for musicians who “can't play” to make noise all they fucking want, and singers who “can't sing” to scream “SO WHAT?”—but we still cling to traditional ideas about the importance of work, of having “PRODUCT”—whether a 7”, a zine, or an indie film—at times making Punk seem more like an unconventional economy, devoted to the indie-biz ethic, than an important culture devoted to questioning the status quo, and screaming, in many different ways, “FUCK YOU” to the hypocritical society that is responsible for all our goddamn anger. Not that there's anything wrong with an alternative economy, devoted to the indie-biz ethic, that's very important, it's JUST that the emphasis always seems to be on PRODUCT—much like the dominant culture we flee.

Okay, no answers this letter-just questions—Is Punk a subculture (as it's usually referred to) or a COUNTERculture Subcultures (mod, skinhead, heavy metal, ravers are borderline) are cultures within the dominant one, that differ in terms of aesthetics (music, fashion, etc.), but share the basic values of the dominant one. A COUNTER culture (such as the youth/political underground of the sixties), as defined in The Social Web: An Intro. to Sociology, is “a group within the society whose members adopt a value system and goals in direct opposition to those of the general culture... Their members defy conventional society norms, remaining faithful to the norms of their particular group.” (That last point has been witnessed by everybody involved in Punk [see also “Chickenshit Conformist”]) Whereas,

“Subcultures, for the most part, reinforce the cultural patterns of the wider society, allowing loyalty to the smaller group to coexist with the loyalty to the larger.”

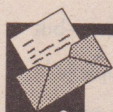
Punk has been from the beginning a counterculture, if only superficially. What else could you call a youth movement that erupted (at least in the public's eye) with screams of “I am an AntiChrist/I am an anarchist” and insults hurled at royalty?? Punk in action has more faithfully been a sub culture. What we need to do is keep working towards keeping/making Punk a counterculture, to avoid the depressing moral sell-outs and copouts of ex-hippies, -yippies, and -radicals. This ain't just about politics and protests and whether you eat meat (don't, tho) or do drugs—this is about our behavior as a movement, genre, aesthetic, and culture. We could learn a thing or two from the sixties, from dada, and from the Situationists—we must take these topics back from scholars and wordy Marxists.

Maybe I'm the only one who was provoked to think about the above by Cahr's column—hope i managed to dodge pretentiousness. Again, a great column...

Patrick T.

7302 White Birch Dr.

Jacksonville, FL 32277



“Just don't do it”, right?

Punk Planet,

This is in response to Slim's “column” in Punk Planet #15

I can't say how much I'm disappointed to see an article with Slim's slant about alcoholism in Punk Planet. Slim defines himself by his problem My name is Slim and I'm an alcoholic. Not “I'm Slim and I like Screeching Weasel,” or “I'm Slim and I'm proud to be .” I don't think that Slim is wrong, I'm just looking for equal time for another (opposing?) point of view.

Alcoholism has a completely unearned reputation as a disease. A disease is a malady/illness that an animal is inflicted with due to circumstances beyond his/her control, resulting from the effect of heredity, infection, diet or environment. Slim writes; “come to terms with the fact that it (alcoholism) is a disease it is not your fault and you didn't choose to be this way, but for reasons that are beyond you, you can't control your drinking.” Well, if being an alcoholic means that a person cannot control their drinking, then how do many people, including Slim, stop drinking? Simple: BY CONTROLLING THEIR DRINKING! Slim came to grips with the fact that his drinking was a problem and CONTROLLED HIMSELF!!

Next, and this is the thing that killed me the most, Slim claims that “it's not your fault.” Whose fault is it? Is it my fault that you tilt the bottle? Your parents fault? NC! You fucking tilt the bottle and drink and swallow. Not my fault. Yours! Slim writes: “...you didn't choose to be this way.” Who made the choice for Slim or me or anyone? No one BUT Slim or me or whoever!

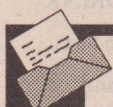
Now, there are two points I'll make before I end. One: I know that drinking is a powerfully debilitating problem, and that alcohol grasps drinkers and can ruin lives, and I do not write any of this with the intention of undermining anyone's prohibition. Two; I realize that when alcoholism is defined as a disease, it is easier to beat. “I have a disease” is much easier to say than “I've completely fucked myself up because I've been weak.” And if someone needs to make beating alcoholism easier for themselves, more power to them. Whatever works. In fact, Alcoholics Anonymous has existed as a crusade for years based on this principle,,

combined with a belief in (choose one) a higher power, God, Jesus Christ, etc.

I guess the reason I've written this was that Slim's article was in Punk Planet, a magazine which (no matter which particular group of "punk" its readers may fall under) is about ideas that are separate from the mindless drivel of everything (most things) that is (are) mainstream. And his ideas are based on principles which I've always believed would be absent on my ideal punk planet: weakness, complacency, and conformity.

L. McCoy

San Diego, CA



Hey PP-

OK-Question: What's the deal with David Hake, Punk Planet columnist? I don't know the guy, I just read the columns.

SO let's be polite and assume, pending other information, that he's a good person. That said, what does Hake the writer think he's doing?

He seems to think he's breaking new ground somewhere with the columns. Yet a phrase comes to mind: "Enigma as defense mechanism." He throws enough flash in the mix to appear as if he knows what he's doing—he's covering all the bases. Not a bad plan. It's what the military would call a pre-emptive strike—guessing who your critics are and breaking them off before they start. Not a bad plan, but when you take it to science levels you fuck up the rhythm. That's not how it works.

Maybe that's the issue here—maybe Hake has the gears spinning too fast, so he gets obtuse as means to compensate. Case may be. Do I need some quotes? I could take up a page with them. Read the last three or four columns, see if you notice. It's an attempt at style at the expense of

substance. It's a good example of someone trying too hard. Hake knows about this—the forced explanations he offers address it. But they don't fix it.

There's a discipline in writing known as metafiction. It says that all the stories have been told, so the only thing left to write about is how tough it is to write a good story. It makes the story deliberately self-conscious by elaborating on the roles of writer and reader. Some people do it very well. Elsewhere it translates into basic navel-gazing, dressed up for style. It's like he's crouched in a corner, taking all comers, fists up ready to spar. Only it isn't that romantic. He's letting the crowd get the best of him. They put him there. His strategic name-dropping really doesn't do shit for me—it's going to be irrelevant to many readers—I'm looking at form and content. The one is forced, the other is lost in the fray.

I don't want to be dude's grammar teacher [ed's note: thank god]. That's not my job, and it's not the point. We need a quote here, from the music reviews section of Punk Planet 14: "This is an excellent example of an American epidemic, marked by people gradually accepting higher levels of garbage as quality." That's the point. The DIY press can be live, or it can be some kind of stomping ground for hacks. And you can see examples of both all around you. Which way you want to go? It is a place to start, experiment, fuck around, sure—that's one of its saving graces—but that's not the end of it. The standards people hold for music should go for writing. Access to print or copy machines is not enough. There has to be something worthwhile from the start. Perhaps I'm not reading carefully enough? Hake's current writing is a like a symbol for the ways that some punks sometimes dive headfirst into petty crap at the complete expense of more interesting things. I'm certainly not expecting a political line from him, let alone one I agree with. Rather, I would like to see space used and pages printed for a REASON. As it stands, with this example and numerous others, there just isn't much to it.

George Tabb comes to mind—I have yet to make it through one of his columns. Zine writers who do things like this aren't breaking any new ground, they're just the same scene-related tedium.

Staring at your navel is not so amazing to watch. Writers can provide insight or they can condemn the DIY press to irrelevance. It's no wonder people may get tired of it.

I feel compelled to add this one disclaimer—if any of you can't tell the difference between this critique and 'talking shit' I guess I'm really lost as to what to say to that. Also—I have no interest whatsoever in any PP/MRR dispute. I enjoy both. There are columns in either that I habitually read start to finish, with zeal, and there are columns I've tried to read and just couldn't.

Sam Tracy

Minneapolis

PS. I was waiting to send this until I saw the latest PP—nice one, folks. However I need to update the above as follows:

Hake, you are a damned PHILISTINE.

So—What do you know? Tell me, Dave. I will suggest that you're not so clever as you suppose in your little hut.

Obviously I had been hoping for the best, above there, but Hake—you seem as fake as they come.

With this I am not referencing your apparent dispute with Felix Von Havoc. I have no information in that matter, and I do believe Felix can resolve such matters on his own.

I am talking about the blinding arrogance that guides your pen. You display a substantially misanthropic attitude, and it causes me to reconsider your worth as a person. Unfortunate. Your latest column, in PP15, was particularly disappointing. Perhaps you should seek a broader range of experiences before you print another one. I am content to leave the exchange at this level, pending further developments. However, you may want to consider the notion that some others may not be so content. In other words, use your fucking head some. ©

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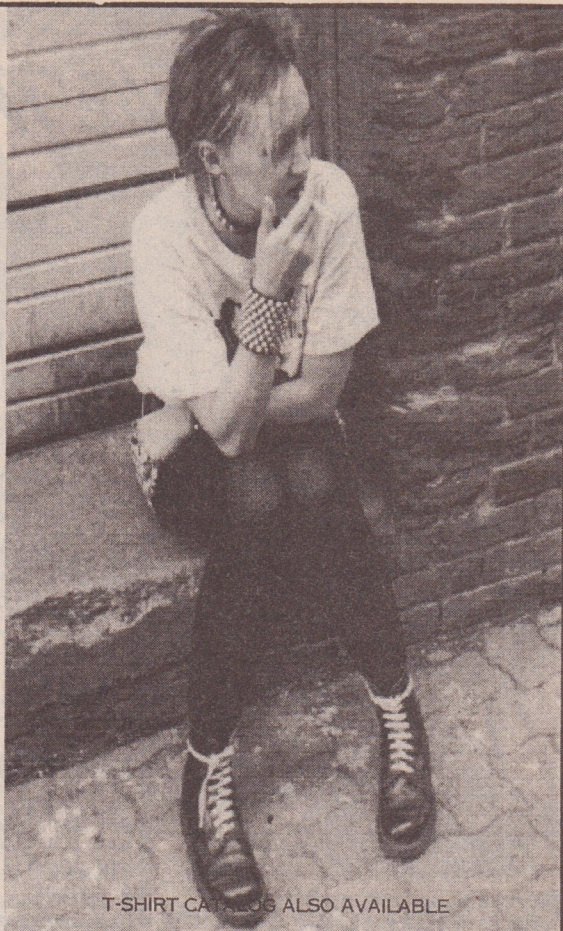
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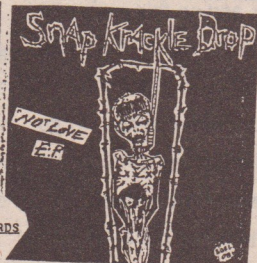
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Sometimes, in deep October, when you'd think all thoughts of swimming holes and cotton candy and top down convertibles had been safely banished for another year, summer digs in its heels and refuses to go quietly.

The leaves may be brown and gold or even almost gone, the lawn mowers put away for the season, and the first leering jack o' lanterns already putting in their appearance, but there's no nip in the air, no crisp autumn chill to send late night stragglers scurrying for their cozy digs.

Instead an unnatural blanket of heat drops down upon the city, thick and heavy, and even though the clock is plodding sluggishly toward midnight, nobody's in a hurry to get home to bed. It's not like midsummer heat, though, the kind that hits you like a sledgehammer and makes you carefully consider every movement, ponder whether it's even worth the effort to lift your sweaty arm and shoo that pesky fly away.

No, this is more like jungle heat. Not the dripping wet, languid, lazy feel of the tropics, but the restless, anxious sensation that comes more from within than without. You've all been there, when you can't sit still and you've just got to move, anywhere, it doesn't matter, as long as it feels like you're headed toward what's happening.

And you know something is happening, or about to, something as big and vital as it is unnameable and indefinable. It might be just around that next corner or it might be clear across town; it doesn't matter, because you're going to keep moving till you find it or it finds you.

Maybe it had as much to do with my age as it did with the season or the temperature or the electricity in the air. It was the year I turned 14, and I was ready for the street.

My parents thought differently, and on this crazy-wild October night I was cooped up indoors, pacing from one window to another like a panther in heat, just itching to get out there underneath the yellow street lamps, to go slipping through the shadows and sneaking through the sullen, sultry darkness as if there were no tomorrow.

In real life, things were a bit more mundane. For one thing it was a school night and I was supposed to be in bed by 10, and for another, most of the excitement was

in my head, because with only a couple exceptions, all the other kids in my gang also had parents, so if somehow I had managed to break out of there, I would have found the usual hangouts deserted, and the streets alive with little more than poignant loneliness.

There was this song playing. I'm sure almost all of you have heard it at one time or another, but that fall it was sitting at number one. It was called "Runaround Sue," by Dion and the Belmonts, and although it was popular with kids of all kinds, it spoke especially to hoods and greasers, the kind of kids that I ran with.

The minute the doo-wop intro kicked in your mind's eye could see clear as all get out these leather-jacketed Italian kids with slicked up and screwed down DA haircuts, looking menacing and beautiful all at once, rippling with what David Bowie would refer to years later as "animal grace," and with premature doom written all over their angelic faces.

It might have been just an image, of course. For all I know, Dion and the Belmonts were some upper middle class kids who got dressed up that way by central casting; maybe, as I preferred to imagine, they were real live greasers who sang their way up from the streets. Maybe some day I'll meet Dion and ask him myself; he's still, at the age of 56 or so, kicking around the fringes of the pop music world and doing pretty well for himself, unlike a lot of my friends from that time, who've been dead longer than many of you have been alive.

Anyway, the other day I gave a lot of thought to that song and that singer and that October night. What got me started was hearing the song again, under very different circumstances, on a sunny and windy morning here in Berkeley.

As some of you know, I generally begin my days by going down to the park near my house and doing some sets of t'ai chi (a Chinese martial art). The place where I practice is a volleyball court where no one ever plays volleyball. Apart from a few other kung fu people, the only users of the court are a motley crew of what some people would call homeless gentlemen and others might call bums. A nice compromise might be the phrase used by Jane Jacobs, who refers to them as "leisured indigents."

Whatever you call them, they mostly hang around there and drink, and they're pretty good at it. Sometimes they're already rip-roaring drunk when I get there at 8 o'clock in the morning, though it may be that they're still coasting on their efforts from the night before.

They mostly ignore me and I return the favor, though from time to time we exchange mutual glances of sympathy: I'm reflecting how sad it is that they're drinking their lives away, and they're probably feeling sorry for me because I don't get to lounge around all day the way they do.

They often have a cheap transistor radio playing loudly in the background, which nobody pays any attention to. Normally it's tuned to the all-news station, or to one of those wacko talk shows, but once in a while they play the oldies station, and that's what was on this morning. And right in the middle of my t'ai chi set, my ears snapped to attention at the unmistakable sound of "Runaround Sue."

OK, I must have heard that song a thousand times - it seems like ten thousand times - over the past 35 years, but for some reason it took on a special meaning this morning. My first reaction was to think how

terribly sad it was, to hear the soundtrack of my flagrant youth reduced to tinny background noise for a bunch of forlorn drunks who'd hopped a slow freight to nowheresville.

But then I looked a little deeper, past the ragged clothes and the bruised faces and shattered egos, and found myself remembering that these men were of more or less the same generation as me, that like me, they'd no doubt heard the same song many years ago under vastly different circumstances, when their lives were full of passion and promise, when everything seemed possible and adventure lurked around every corner.

Some days I find myself getting annoyed with these guys. Too much of their cigarette smoke blows my way when I'm trying to concentrate on my breathing, they yell and argue about the stupidest things, and toss garbage all over the place as if they had their own personal servants to clean up after them. But in this particular moment my heart went out to them. Something had gone horribly wrong, somewhere along the line all the magic had gone out of their lives and been replaced by a tawdry, sordid ritual of self-abuse that would likely end on a coroner's slab, surrounded by strangers who wouldn't know their names and weren't being paid to care.

Most of them were dressed in ragged, hand-me-down vestiges of the 60s counterculture, and once more I reflected on the cruel ravages of time: no doubt many of these guys had first come to Berkeley about the same time I had, drawn by the prospect of this exciting new youth culture that was promising to remake the world according to the principles of truth and justice and peace and love. Just when was it, how was it, that the promise of this beautiful new life tailed off into the despair of the street corner drunk? Just when, how, did the fun and partying and laughter shared with friends devolve into the dreary mechanics of self-destruction?

I thought this was especially significant because it was only a few weeks earlier that I saw a full-fledged chaos punk, complete with political slogans and anarchy symbols, standing by the freeway ramp with one of those "Will work for food" signs. Next to him his girlfriend guarded the shopping cart that housed their meager belongings.

Was I being too quick to judge, to assume that these two idealistic punk rockers had already entered the downward spiral that, if they weren't careful, could with frightening quickness, transform them from starry-eyed youngsters into desperate old bums? Maybe. Not everyone who stands around begging for money is permanently down and out, even though it sometimes seems like it here in Berkeley (there's one lady on Shattuck Avenue who brags she's been at it for four and a half years in the same spot).

But even if this particular punk rock couple were just temporarily down on their luck, I knew too well that a lot of other punk rockers, including some I know personally, were already on their way out. I think of the kids I knew when they first came to Berkeley, and how beer started as a fun thing to do on show nights, then gradually turned into a habit, eventually a religion and a way of life. Or maybe it wasn't beer at all, but crank or crack or a combination of whatever chemicals might momentarily vaporize memories and dull the pain of existence.

I'm not intending to go off on some anti-drinking tangent here. Lots of people use alcohol moderately and enjoy it. Some people use alcohol immoderately and still enjoy it. Really, I'm not even talking about alcohol at all, but rather about the way that things once precious and beautiful can, if we're not careful, turn into things awful and destructive. It could be the alcohol or the pot that used to get you high, it could be the ideology that once made you feel a part of something bigger than yourself, it could be the religion that once brought you closer to God. All of it, in the most vulgar of ways, can turn to shit in the twinkling of an eye.

I spent much of the day and the day after reflecting about this. I had planned writing a column warning my friends and fellow punk rockers to be careful they didn't turn into derelicts and bums while they were busy having fun. And then, before I could set it down on paper, I realized that I had missed the point, that even though I personally wasn't drinking my life away on a park bench, even though I had a place to live and food to eat and a decent job, that I had my own failures to contend with, and that they were no less real and no less dangerous just because they weren't as obvious.

A very wise woman once told me - forgive me if I've quoted her before, because I probably have - "Larry, the important thing, the only important thing in this life, is the people you meet along the way, the people whose lives you touch, the people you love and who love you. All the rest of it is fluff - the money, the fame, the degrees and honors; all that matters is the people."

And that's where I've failed. OK, so I've worked hard, and accomplished a few things in life. I pay my bills and don't rip people off and recycle my trash and lend a hand wherever I can. But through it all I've grown more and more isolated, more and more a world unto myself, and in a very real sense that's the ultimate failure. Bums on a park bench can at least enjoy each other's company while they pass around the bottle that will hasten their demise, they can exchange a few kind or funny words that for the moment can help them to feel human again.

How did I ever get so alone? It's especially odd, considering that over the past ten years I've come into contact with literally thousands of people, many of them among the brightest and creative of our time. Perhaps the best answer I can come up with is that I took an understandable and even admirable desire, the need to be independent, and took it way too far. I didn't want to have to count on anyone else for anything. I thought the way Ben Weasel once sang: "If I want to do something right, I've got to do it myself or someone else will fuck it up."

For whatever reason - maybe because people let me down a lot when I was younger - I found it difficult to trust anyone with anything that was truly important to me. A lot of people, especially those who don't know me very well, admire and envy my independence. "Man, you can do anything you want," they say, and wonder why I roll my eyes, or, sometimes, quickly avert them to hide a stray tear.

Independence is a cruel hoax. There's no such thing in this world. Interdependence, sure, but no one stands alone. Anyone who tries is doomed to fall, and fall hard.

OK, it's taken me over two weeks to write this column. The vast majority of that time was spent staring into space or doing anything I

could possibly think of to distract myself from the things I had to say. I'm finally finishing it tonight, after another marathon session of procrastination, on my birthday. I'll spend what's left of it alone, partly by choice, maybe entirely by choice, I don't know. Ben Weasel also sang: "The changes that alter us are the product of our own volition. And we become what we hate."

I never meant things to be this way, did I? Or was it just a case of life being, as John Lennon put it, the thing that happens to you while you're busy making plans? I had a lot of plans, and some of them even came true, but so much of my life seems to have gotten lost somewhere in the confusion. Let's bring back Ben Weasel for yet one more insight: "You're only young once, old forever."

No, I'm not particularly bummed about how old I've gotten. I'm in pretty reasonable shape, especially for someone closing in on the half century mark. And, as the saying goes, considering the alternative...

But I'm not too pleased right now about what I've let myself become, a prisoner of my own fear and alienation, even while all these years I've been speaking out and reaching out to help other people break out of theirs. It's weird. I guess we really do become what we hate. Oh well, I've still got a little bit of volition left in me, too: let's see how the changes have altered me by the time we meet again.



Wintertime In Rockridge.

The old woman died in September. We never really found out her name, but we knew that she had died in one of the upstairs bedrooms, the big one with the large windows and the old gas heater. She had been ill for some time. Some of her grown children had lived with her in the house for decades. They had neglected the house as much as they had neglected their mother.

Behind the house there was a kind of guest's quarters – a tiny one bedroom apartment flanked by a rotting, lopsided shed. Joel and Brenda lived there for a few months with a couple of junkies, until the old woman died. Then they made a bid for the house, and finally the son and daughter, now owners, agreed to let them move in, provided that they clean it up and make some repairs in exchange for the lack of any deposit. I needed a place to live, so I signed on to move in with them New Year's Eve, along with a couple of other friends, Edmund and Tanya.

In December, we all got together at the house for the first time. A bitter chill had set in firmly that winter, and the sidewalks on the quiet street were piled with the scattered remains of broken brown leaves.

The house was the ugliest one on the street. It was a nondescript color, like old banana pudding, with a chipped pink trim. The roof rose

in an awkward "A"-frame, and the front living room window was huge and bare, taking up the entire breadth of the front wall of the house, revealing the living room almost floor to ceiling. I walked inside, and Joel and Brenda gave me the grand tour. Their new Labrador puppy, Nathan, jumped up on me with his dirty black paws.

The place was a fucking wreck. The copper brown carpet was thick with dirt, grease, and bald patches. The woodwork on the stairs was broken and grimy. The bathroom tile was peeled away. In what would become Tanya's room, there was a gigantic hole in the plaster wall, revealing where termites had made their home, devouring the wood almost to trembling stacks of sawdust. The tub downstairs had no showerhead, or curtain rod. There was no water pressure whatsoever. And the second floor, well that was just creepy. There was an odd storage space that had gaping holes in the floor, and a bizarre assortment of things, including a four-foot tall plastic snowman with a lightbulb inside. We christened it "Frosty," and set it in the window facing the street. It grinned malevolently like something out of a bad horror movie.

In short, the house was fucked, and we had a month to sort it out. Not only that, the family had left some of their hideous, mildewed furniture in the living room. It took them ages to haul their crap away. Their broken, rusted car remained in the driveway, wheels flattened to the rims, roof peeling and cracking like a sunburn.

We tore up all the carpets, wondering how they could possibly have become so... greasy. As Joel was ripping one section up, a dribble of the mysterious liquid actually ran down his arm to his elbow. Of course, the wood floors beneath, which had surely been beautiful fifty years before, were now stained black with unknown substances. They had to be sanded by hand. Some of the carpet padding that had been nailed to the floors had to be scraped up with a knife, it had become so stubbornly glued to the wood.

The work was arduous, and in the end, thankless. The night we moved in, we had a new year's party to celebrate. As I started on my second glass of bubbly champers, I realized that I had contracted some sort of 24 hour flu thingy. It was our first night sleeping in the house, just three of us, and I felt like a sack of shit. An omen, perchance? I retired to bed just after midnight.

I was awakened abruptly around three a.m. My head was heavy with sleep and sickness. Something had woken me. There it was again.

THUD.

Loudly crashing hard against a wall or ceiling. Then weird scratching sounds, like tiny voices. THUD. THUD. Like a door slamming shut over and over. Scratch, scratch.

I bolted upright, mad with fear, and just as suddenly, I was hiding beneath the covers. I tried to figure out where the sound could be coming from. Joel and Brenda's room was on the opposite side of the house. They were the only ones here. The noise was coming from what felt like only a few feet away.

Then I remembered the house's previous occupant, wasting away and dying in the empty room upstairs a few months before. My heart pounded in my throat. I was sweltering under the duvet. Oh my god this house is totally fucking HAUNTED!! SHIT! I stayed still as a stone, hard-

ly daring to breathe. The loud noises ceased, and I somehow went back to sleep.

When I woke up in the morning, it was to the sound of Joel and Brenda puttering about in the kitchen, which lay on the other side of the wall by my bed. I thought of telling them about the strange experience the night before. Then I heard the noise again, right next to my head! The pounding, the scratching, the whining.

It was Nathan the puppy, locked in the laundry room all night, throwing himself against the door, hungry for attention and breakfast.

...

The winter was cold and wet. The neighborhood we had moved into was the nicest one I had lived in since moving to Oakland. But our house had been utterly neglected for ages. We soon realized who we were dealing with, as far as landlords go. We were dealing with a psychopathic, dysfunctional family. One sister, Patty, the pathologically lying crackhead, had moved into the backhouse with her two children. She always sent them over to borrow our can opener, and the kids never said a word to us, no matter how nice we tried to be. Patty later told Tanya's mother that we performed Satanic rituals. Nice. The other sister, Ruth, was clearly in charge of everything, and had obviously never been a landlady before. We were treated as though we were guests in her home, rather than tenants. She had no comprehension of tenant's rights. She was also a fucking lunatic.

She began by telling us which curtains we could hang in the living room window, disapproving of Brenda's Star Wars bedsheet idea. She retracted her agreement about pets; first by making Joel build a fence around the backyard for Nathan, then insisting that they keep the puppy tied to a tree all day in a mudpuddle. They bought the poor thing a doghouse, but he wouldn't go in it. Then one day the landlady barged into the house without warning, or even knocking (illegal), bulging corpulently in her hot pink tracksuit.

"Where's the rent!" she hollered at me. I was still agape at her impudence and tacky dress sense.

"Er, Edmund has it...I didn't know he hadn't sent it..."

"Well? Where is it?" she snapped, revealing her alarming lack of intellect.

She was stubborn, cold, and hard, and came from a family rooted in deeply-held misogyny. Though she was the obvious matriarch, she refused to deal with anyone but Joel or Edmund, the male tenants, because the family felt that the men must be the ones in charge of the house, and we woman tenants hadn't a clue; we just did all the cooking and cleaning. It was hellish. The only reason we could discern for the rule against having a cat was the peculiar fact that Ruth was afraid of cats. But my cat was staying with me no matter what. I wasn't afraid of this woman. Nonetheless, by the second month, we had already decided to move out.

The roommates became increasingly weird. Joel and Brenda, who could barely care for their puppy and had very little money, were now having a baby. Brenda celebrated by quitting her job. Edmund was never home and never sent our bills, preferring to still live with his mom, which was where he had moved from in the first place. Tanya, still in high

school and attempting emancipation from her psychotic, prescription drug-addicted mom (who lived in Miami), was the most normal one. And me, I had already bought my ticket for London.

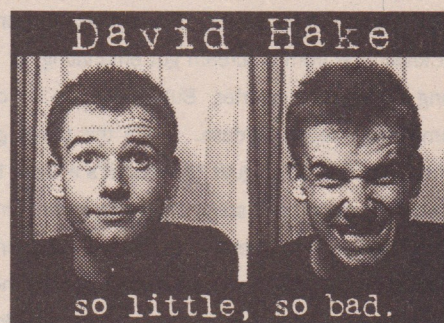
The last day in the doomed house was the day I exacted my revenge. We had fixed up this disgusting house and made it almost livable again. These bastards had never thanked us. We had given up hours of our time and plenty of money, only to be screwed over heartlessly by monumentally stupid people.

I had a carton of eggs. A few were hidden around the house, holes punched in them, to decay. Others were broken and emptied into the lightbulb fixtures on the walls, rendering them useless. I superglued various objects to the mantelpiece. New, white potatoes were shoved down the drains, to expand and rot and block the pipes terminally. We dumped our garbage and cat litter into the dirt cellar. We tore down everything we had installed in the bathrooms. Brenda painted her room bright red. I spilled several buckets of water on to the hardwood floors, so that they would warp and buckle. Honey was left out for the ants. Finally, I superglued the bedroom doors locked. They would have to be broken down.

Before we beat it out of there that night, we heard a strange, loud popping noise coming from the upstairs bedroom. The haunted one. At first we were quite frightened, as we could see bright flashes along with the pops coming from inside the room. Then I realized that the eggs that I had dumped into the light fixtures were now cooking on the electrical current, and shorting out the sockets. The house could actually burn down! Good thought, but too risky. I ran inside and immediately began pulling all the fuses out of the downstairs fuse box. They clattered to the floor in darkness. We ran from the house laughing. From what I hear, it wasn't rented for months afterward.

...

By the way, I have just finished a double-barreled issue of *Hex* magazine. Issues five and six are currently out. It's a bunch of stories I wrote whilst traipsing about in foreign lands. Interested? It'll cost you \$2.00 postpaid for each issue, or \$3.00 for both at once. No freakin checks. The address is still PO Box 989, Berkeley, CA. 94701. They are fat, at about seventy pages each. I nearly killed myself writing them. Cheers!



Life don't go on, not like it used to. On a good day I can walk from 5th St. down to the Gay Nineties and get at least one potential trick in the first five minutes, but it's so hard to say. My head is held high, and as my eyes rove over the interior horizon of the Minneapolis landscape, I am filled with warmest,

deepest sense of eternal satisfaction. From a recent online interview with yours truly on internet relay chat channel #gaydad/son/sex: "There's no money to be found in underground music, only misery. There is a passion involved here. I do not care to go mainstream ever. That's not where the heart is." Some press conference that was. Yuk, yuk, yuk. My eyes are rolling into the back of my head for the last time now. I'll be done with this promising masterwork in a few days yet. Coming like a sudden rush of platitudes, I don't care if they seem like new ones, only that they seem like real ones. No, punk rocker, we're not inventing anything here. If it works for you, you'll find you've got a boot to your head and your teeth biting into the curb, I'll see them spray everywhere, or a cumshot in the mouth, swallowing spirit. I don't care if you do it yourself, I just care that you do it well, that you do it like your life depended on it.

The idea of pop punk is such an atrocious nightmare. Not serious enough, not intelligent enough? Not clever enough. You fucking bet. And what sort of elitist am I to decide? The best kind. I don't have time for the good time party music, the yesteryear nostalgia, the slam-pit mosh fests, the old way, the respected way. It all goes down as good as fraternity tradition. Who visited this curse upon us in the first place? I know a pretender when I see one, and I feel like I've got a lot more to see before this is all said and done. It's the sad feeling you get when you know you'll not be checking out of this place you're at for awhile yet. Thieving bitches, lesbians and the mafia. This is what the movie *Bound* is all about. It is an absolute, monumental "must see" of a movie. Better sex than you've been having, cocky, self assured, uncompromising and uncannily understandable. What is there to understand about punk? What "tough facts" is it foisting on the public, what new savvy character does it have to convey, what is it doing better than something more articulated couldn't do? I find the whole experience, at this point, worthless. Being flip for a moment I can say that for some several thousands I can have my head frozen, awaking millennia later and have the last laugh. Vampires. You know what that fascination with being a parasite is all about.

Hake is alive. You might've heard otherwise, you might think that Billy Childish has gotten the best of me yet, but I still like hardcore for every blues scale that I've become familiarized with like an idiot savant who doesn't know one from a scream gut emanating, or a youth subculture waving it's ass for a quarter. But believe me I'm one saucy for a twenty-something pseudo-hardass. I like the tough guys and I'm starting to think that the tough guys like me. It's a basic thing. Follow your nose. My roommate can't stand any of my writing unless I read it to her in the car with a kind of exasperated tone like there's got to be something better on TV. Once we get there I can tell her that she's right, there is. I'm not a spokesperson for the kids. The kids can go to hell. Positively anti-hero, wouldn't you say? I still wonder to myself where hardcore kids go when they die.

There's a HOLLY GOLIGHTLY LP with your name on it, and though it doesn't surpass better efforts like "The Good Things" 10", it has a sleepy, profound quality like that HIS NAME IS ALIVE "Stars on ESP" LP on 4AD (totally alternative, natch, I'm slipping). You got to get the pre-

tentious records out of the way first. Neo-classical music, for one. None of us actually like the RACHEL'S, we just buy their records so we can say we listen to them. There's a new one out by them too, roughly record three in a twelve month period. ONE EYED GOD PROPHECY, MINE, DAWNBREED and a retroactive shout-out to UNION OF URANUS (Quebecois \$50 kick-back stuffed in my pocket) hints at a quality connection between Germany and the French-speaking province of Canuck in the universe of hardcore taking us through to the next century. The fires of friction begin at the atomic level. Let's go. Sound like a THREADBARE t-shirt? Well they've got a posthumous one coming out once Doghouse, Ltd. recovers from the financial blow of renaming the worst band in existence OMAHA and hoping that no one would notice.

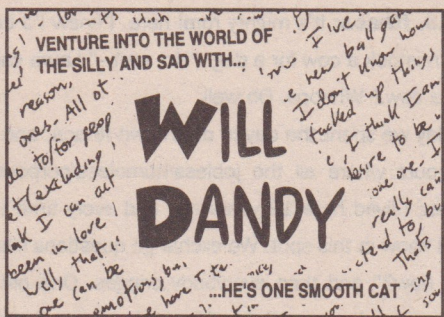
If we've learned anything from punk rock it's that there has got to be something cooler than punk rock. Never settle for satisfaction. Time after time after time again, like the singer say Cyndi Lauper.

I can't tell you what I do with myself in the undocumented hours. My sexuality came to me like the one card in the hand that never knew how to play itself. Where would I be if I didn't have homosexuality to set me apart? And you know that it doesn't really set me apart because I want the same kind of things that you do, and that I'm no more evil or dangerous than you are. I'm clean cut because I think that if I keep myself together that I won't have to own up to my sinful ways. Play it safe, turn the other cheek, bury my head in the sand. That's how I keep my nose clean. I think you know this *modus operandi*. If I'm attracted to you, it's probably because you're just like me. If you're not a sissy, then who gives a damn? So here's a dreamy vision for you. I'm running my hands along these wool pants I'm wearing, and as I look over me I see a smiling face down there near the warm fabric of my leg, a cropped Caesar haircut, an olive leaf perched over two ears. I've lived a life wallowing in sleaze, it doesn't start or stop with closeted boys masturbating in the bed with me. The temptation to break down and tell all is very strong in me. Violins start here. I'm sure my detractors doubt that there's much to say. Oh Johnny, if you only knew the things I've done, or who.

SATISFACT "The Unwanted Sounds Of" LP is a tribute from New Order to Joy Division while adding something more, clearly and succinctly. The latest installment they provide in K Records International Pop Underground series does not either dissappoint. Moody, dissonant, unapologetic keyboards. The latest MONORCHID 7" on Gravity is like having CIRCUS LUPUS come home to us again, but so much more is inherent in this minimalist, quirky package that shows off Chris Thompson so nicely. Liking the newest REGISTRATORS "Terminal Boredom" LP is like saying that we can get into neon, funny sunglasses and garage rock all over again. We can. Get it together underground listeners and do a homegrown version of CIBO MATTO meets PIZZICATO FIVE. It's about time.

I'm dedicating myself to the Martian bacteria. "My impression is that bacterial life exists on planets around one in ten stars, maybe more. I would view life on Mars not as a surprise but as a new frontier", says Stanley Miller of University of California, San Diego. From the homepage for the Mars Surveyor project it is stated definitively that as far as the

youth crew" schtick like a bad porno.



and luckily all of my stuff arrived intact (for which I'm very happy).

here (yikes!). (Not to mention lifting them all up to the third floor!).

just really neat. So for now, all is actually surprisingly good.

sure to you as well...), but it just brought me down.

a year ago when I was really down in the dumps I began a self-titled

(and initiated) "anti-bitterness-campaign" (yes I chose the title to sound dumb and silly, much like myself thank you...). Basically I refused to view things negatively and even though it was forced after a while I started feeling better about myself and what was going on in my life and being happy, which, at the time, was a big shift.

Since that point I find that I can apply the same tactic to more minor disturbances in the flow of things. I guess that's why I've been feeling so much better in general lately. The main problem is that despair is a damn good creative force. I mean being happy is good too, it makes me want to call people and organize things and write songs and be silly, but being upset makes me want to write and design stuff, so it's kind of a trade off. I guess that as with most things it's best when there's a little of both worlds, huh? Perfection not being perfection, what a good idea... I'm all in.

...

An interesting thing that I've noticed recently in punk rock, and I guess in other things as well is that names words start to lose their meaning after a while when used in other contexts. I guess what I'm saying is that when I say "Capitalist Casualties" now-a-days I don't even think about the meaning of those two words, instead I think about the band. Even weirder is that I no longer even think of it as two words, but instead kind of as a one new one. I mean think about it, everytime someone says "Mr. T Experience" to you do you think of Mr. T lifting up the A-team van? No, you think of a silly pop-punk band. I just think that it's a real interesting change in perception in meaning that's all.

...

I suppose that that's it this time 'round. Check out my new address if you get the hankerin' to write. You know I always love mail, even if it takes me forever to respond (although I'm considering getting better about it...). So here's the new info if you are so inspired: Will; PO Box 709; Hampshire College; Amherst, MA 01002. email "William_Killingsworth@hampshire.edu" ok? so there.



The following is excerpted from an mobile e-mail series:

Aug. 9, New York: In approximately 18 hours, Laura Brown and I will embark on our trip to Iowa. I'm pretty melancholy about leaving New York. Everyone comments on the juxtaposition of Iowa and Manhattan, though most don't use the word "juxtaposition". I called Citibank to change my billing address and the woman said, "Well. That'll be a switch." Someone else said to me today (I can't remember who) "I've heard that there are..."

and I thought they were going to say "a lot of nice places in Iowa." You know, like New Jersey? Instead they said, "I hear there are a lot of places in Iowa that are a lot like Manhattan." And then they burst into hysterics. I'm tempted to walk down 9th Avenue with a sign that says, "I'm going to Iowa. Tell me what you think. Be honest."

Naturally, Laura and I have had ongoing conversations about the trip, but the most crucial ones have been about music and coffee. We thought about each making special mix tapes for the road, but quickly realized that they would probably be identical. We don't foresee a coffee problem until we get to Ohio, and then we should be safe in Chicago. In any case, we're bringing a pound of good coffee and the necessary apparatus.

Ithaca, New York will be our first stop. I have made several fact-finding phone calls today to see if certain old friends are in town. I tracked one down to his dishwashing job. He has no phone. I asked about another old friend and he said, "Oh she lives over by the blah blah. She doesn't have a phone." I said, "Do you know her address?" and he replied "No, but I know where she lives." Locating these people is somewhat labor intensive. These are not people that you can look up in the book. If they do have a phone, it's disconnected or it's somebody else's. Then my friend had to go because his boss was giving him "The Hairy Eyeball." I haven't seen this guy in over 10 years and I have a feeling he hasn't changed much.

Aug. 13, Ithaca: It's mighty rural here. I knew I'd been away too long when I mistook a cow for a dog. "No, wait -" Laura said. "That's no dog. That's a cow." Whoops. Oh well.

Yesterday we spent the day in downtown Ithaca, and hung around for a few hours where all the jobless/homeless/purposeless/clueless people gather. I lived here 12 years ago and every time I come back I find people I know in this spot. We exchange questions like, "Geez, how old are you now?" and then everybody cringes. One old friend who I haven't seen since I was probably 18 has been reading my column in Punk Planet for the past year. I handed out my zine to a few people. We did some laundry and went to a diner. The diner was a highlight - they bring hot sauce to your table automatically. I didn't have to ask for it. We also went to a great music store. The owner's dog lies on the floor with a tennis ball. As soon as someone picks up a guitar, the dog leaps up and brings the ball over. "She does that every time," the owner explained. "I can hardly play at home at all." Laura bought a Midi Serial Port for \$20. She was like "\$20? Really?" and they said, "We have no use for it." and she said, "I love this store."

We've named our rental car "The Sperm-Mobile". It looks like a sperm, that's why.

Aug. 15, Chicago: We made it to Chicago (AKA The Land Of Ed) in one shot. The trip was generally unproblematic, with a few exceptions. First there was the coffee, which grew more and more transparent as we headed west. Did I mention the Non-Dairy Creamer? Then there was the truck tire that blew out next to us. No major problem, except that it scared the shit out of us. Then when we got to Indiana, we started hearing tornado warnings on the radio (yes, we listened to

the radio - more on that later). GET INSIDE. GO TO THE BASEMENT. STAY AWAY FROM WINDOWS. Since we didn't really know where the hell we were, we weren't sure what this meant for us. Well, the sky went black and the wind blew and it rained really hard and we couldn't see. Then it was over. It was really fun. Meanwhile, "Comfortably Numb" by Pink Floyd played on the radio. Surreal is a good word.

My east coast snobbery was taken down a peg by the quality of radio stations in the Midwest. Not only were there good rock stations (of which there are NONE in NYC, as far as I know) but they actually played a really dirty Frank Zappa song and said some swears on the air. We were impressed.

In general, however, we were definitely strangers in a strange land through Ohio and Indiana. When we stopped for bad coffee, we drew odd looks from the burly blond cheeseburger eaters and gas guzzlers. I was wearing my regulation summer uniform (black shorts & T shirt). What's the big deal, I mumbled in their general direction. I started to think of and refer to myself as Satan. "Satan's going to the bank machine." "Satan's going to check the Satanic Voicemail." Now that we've landed in Chicago's Oh-So-Alterna-Neighborhood, Wicker Park, I can get my bearings and brace myself for Iowa.

Now for the RoadKill Report (note: numbers are approximate)

14 Raccoons

7 Possums

1 Dog

1 Cat

1 Laura Brown (speeding ticket)

5 Birds (various small types)

3 skunks

17 truck tires

1 Volvo 144 sedan (vintage 1980?)

1 Toyota Corolla

Aug. 18, Iowa City: It's about nine-thirty AM Iowa time. Why am I up so early, you ask? Probably because I was dead asleep before one AM (this has to be a record). Laura is on her way back to the East Coast and I'm having separation anxiety. We had a great visit with Ed in Chicago, and a fairly smooth final leg of the trip. Laura was alarmed by the way everybody says "How are you today? Have a good one," etc. When we crossed the Iowa border there was a sign that said "Welcome to Iowa! You Make Me Smile!" We went to Java House, which is THE good coffee shop here in Iowa City, to stock me up and juice her up for the road. Java House is going to be my savior.

I'm living pretty large here - the stereo is all set up, and I'm reading zines and listening to CDs I got in Chicago. I don't know when it's going to hit me that I'm staying here. I'm going to do a little interior decorating - I'm thinking of something in an Early American College Student Apartment motif. You know - a few milk crates, some christmas lights, stereo in the kitchen, futon on the floor. I just love that look. Don't you? It's so...youthful.

I have a little less than a week until I start school. Frankly, I hope school rocks really hard and that I come out of it with significantly

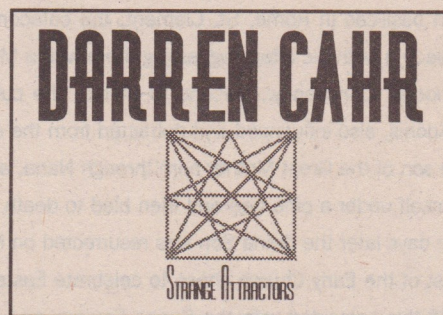
increased earning power. If you see me wearing three hats and two pairs of pants on 9th Avenue in a couple years, mumbling to myself and harassing passersby with the plea, "Hey Mister/Ma'am, you wanna buy a PLAY? I spent all my money getting back from IOWA, " we will know it was not worth it. I hope everyone will keep their fingers crossed for me.

...

October 1. Rent is due. Still in Iowa. The Archers Of Loaf played here in early September at a place called Gabe's. The band was good, but the scene was dismal - a veritable sea of drunk college guys in baseball hats. I have since heard, in reference to Gabe's, those fateful words "It used to be cool there." Ah well.

I'm way behind on Violation Fez (The Religion Issue), so by the time you read this there may still be time to submit. E-mail me. Tell me about you best, worst and weirdest experiences with religion in 20 words or less. I may still be accepting stories and cartoons, too. Back issues are still available for \$1 or trade

Violation Fez c/o Leah Ryan, PO Box 2228, Times Square Station, New York, NY 10108 • LEAHzz@aol.com



The end of the world is approaching.

I can tell that the end of the world is approaching, because, well, everyone's telling me that the end of the world is approaching. I turn on channel 38 here in Chicago, our local evangelical Christian station, and I hear that THE END OF THE WORLD IS APPROACHING. A show called "This Week In Bible Prophecy" explains, in detail, how everything that happens in the news that week is predicted in the Bible (you'd be amazed to know that, in Revelations, it is predicted that Yeltsin will have heart problems — incredible!), and how each and every occurrence brings us one step closer to the end, when the head of the European Economic Union will rise as the anti-Christ (and, by the way, I'm not making this up). He will declare war on Israel, and, with the help of Russia, engage in a battle on Har Meggido (Armageddon) for all men's soles (or is it souls? I guess only our feet will know....) and nuclear weapons will rain on the major cities of the world, just like in ABC's made for TV Movie Smash of 1983, "The Day After,"). Just about the time that the anti-Christ is ready to spring his plot on the world (with universal product codes on everyone's hands as the mark of the beast) Christians throughout the world will disappear, lifted bodily into heaven where they will surround Jesus' throne. Those left behind will have to deal with seven years of tribulations, until Jesus comes back, saves everyone, and spends a thousand years with the

folks on earth, until everyone goes to Heaven to, I guess, eat as much as they want, and never gain a pound!

Where on earth do they come up with this stuff? Jesus, from what I can discern, was your basic, mildly Essene-like Rabbi, who preached some classic Hillel-ish non-violence. What happened next is that this random guy was melded to an amalgam of then-popular near-eastern religions, to form what we now know as Christianity. In fact, Christianity adopted most of the details of these earlier pagan religions, without so much as making up new dates for everything. This process is best described by Wilton Barnhardt:

"The semi-Zoroastrian cult of Mithra (from the 500s b.c.e.) was direct competition for Christianity, and hence Christianity compromised with it. Mithra, born of the Heavenly Virgin, was a Sun god, born on December 25. The Mithraic birth ritual involved the chant: "The Virgin has brought forth! The light is waxing!" Vermaseran ("Mithra the Secret God," London, 1963) identifies the Communion-like meal with Mithra's prayer: "He who shall not eat of my body and drink of my blood shall not be saved." Mithra performed miracles and healings, and the cult emphasized charity, chastity and an afterlife. Underneath one of the earliest Christian basilicas in Rome, St. Clement, the catacombs have as their centerpiece a Mithraic altar, suggesting there was a Mithraic variation on "orthodox" Christianity....Second to Mithra, the cult of Attis, a variation of Adonis, also influenced and detracted from the early church. Attis was the son of the Great Mother born through Nana, a virgin. Attis castrated himself under a pine tree and then bled to death in the prime of life. Three days later the divine Son was resurrected on March 24 — the date most of the Early Church chose to celebrate Easter for several centuries. All this coincided with the Spring Equinox and innumerable vegetation God ceremonies for the renewed blooming of the land."

No coincidence there, eh? And we won't even get into the Easter rabbit and the Christmas tree. Many of the near eastern religions of the day had young, virgin-born, thirty-three year old dead saviors — the only difference is that most of the random near-eastern religions of the day weren't lucky enough to have a Roman Emperor like Constantine who was willing to adopt the story as the official religion of the Empire.

And, so, here we are. Millions of deaths later — those crusades and inquisitions really adhered to the notion of Christian charity, eh? Hey Torquemada, ever hear of ETHICS!?

But anyway....

According to another show, Jack Van Impe Presents, the next leader of the Catholic church may be the anti-Christ (he's busy, you know) and could steer hundreds of millions of Christians into satanic servitude. I guess I give people more credit than that — I'm thinking that if the Pope suddenly told Catholics to start practicing Satanism, that there'd be a bit of a mutiny.

But maybe not.

I was led to think about this by the random postings on the Internet that talk about the coming of the millennium — and the fact that, as with the passing of the year 1000 (where monks rioted in the streets) there's going to be a big freak-out. Cats mating with dogs, lions laying down with lambs, mass hysteria!!

THE END OF THE WORLD IS APPROACHING.

I guess my question for those who believe is this: Why would God create the world to end it on a date certain like, say, the year 2000 (which, to be honest, is just a random number generated relative to the age of the earth and the age of its civilizations). What's the point of creating a world to "save" people willing to believe in you?

I guess that I just don't get it. Not the existence of God — I'm willing to believe in a creator, for the simple reason that its as good an explanation as any other. But this salvation stuff — a good, omnipotent God wouldn't send good people to "hell" for not believing in him, while saving bad people who did...

Or would he?

Anyway, it's just a thought. The end of the world is approaching, and that's of somewhat more concern. Should I prepare a party, or should I wear my Swans t-shirt and sit in the dark listening to Throbbing Gristle? Should I go outside and pretend that the Ebola virus is going to wipe out all of humanity, or should I sit on the roof and listen to my Slint album and watch tornadoes rip the city in two? Or will Hurricane Josephine be the final harbinger of doom, the new flood, the delluvian wasteland—will it bring Kevin Costner starring in "Waterworld"?

Perhaps we'll never know.

But the choices are endless. Perhaps I'll sit in my living room, watch Channel 38, and wait for the world come to an end. Not with a bang.

But with a whimper.

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Deadline pressure is upon us and I don't have any time to develop the three or four issues I'm passionately anxious to discuss with you, ("term limits for movie critics" is one). So I'm compelled to resort to a really contemptible scheme: I'm saddling you with an article I wrote a couple of years ago about a vacation that occurred a few years before that. I hope you enjoy it. I hope you already knew the moral of the story!

This is a partial list of what I brought home from India: cotton and silk salwar kameezes, necklaces of malachite, tiger's eye, jade, silver, boxes of saffron, peacock feathers, sandalwood elephants, vivid memories. Among the last there are the "usual" treasures: white morning mist suddenly yielding up the previously invisible Taj Mahal, the enfolding, velvet touch of the Arabian Sea, the vitality and vigor of the streets during midday, brilliant green birds perched on bright, dusty monuments, the strange, squawking roar-lets of tiger cubs in the Mysore zoo,

sugar cane juice and alu chat made fresh in the street, sitar music and jasmine pouring into my room from a palace garden, huge Indian beds that made every night a slumber party, the faint noise of loudspeaker music from a nearby temple sieved through the quiet of Delhi, 4 a.m.

I carried home much more than that, including something I should have been able to pick up a lot closer to home.

I went to India with two friends, Sonia and Marjie. I was luckier than many tourists because Sonia is Indian-born. She speaks Hindi fluently and knows many of the best places to visit. Best of all, she has cousins, aunts and uncles who took us into their homes and, in the Indian tradition, cared for us with unstinting generosity. We saw how they lived, what they ate, what they did. They picked us up at the airport (4 a.m.), loaded us with food and clothing, bargained for us in the shops, answered our questions.

The drawback was that when we weren't staying with Sonia's relatives looking at India from the inside out, we were in five star hotels looking at India very much from the outside in. Considering the tastes and habits of my traveling companions this was the only practical course, but it rankled. I'd backpacked around Europe and driven, bused, and camped across the US. I felt uncomfortable with glamor and luxury. I consoled myself as best I could by remarking that luxury was just another lifestyle and it was only in India, where luxury is inexpensive by American standards, that I could hope to experience it.

Still I was uneasy. Many people in India are very poor, though it is not a desperate, hopeless poverty in most places. The idea of striding about someone else's country, throwing rupees around, buying silks and jewels, eating at the best restaurants, hiring cabs, getting massages and manicures, all with the inevitable air of command and self-importance that wealth imposes on its owner, left me feeling embarrassed. I wandered around India solemnly, anxious not to give offense, seldom meeting anyone's eyes.

My friends were less sensitive on the subject—and considerably less self-conscious. We were in Jaipur, that famous desert city in Rajasthan. We toured the City Palace and Hawa Mahal, a huge, elegant façade where, until a few decades ago, the zenana women peeked out of their enclosed world onto the streets of downtown Jaipur. We went to see the Observatory, the royal cremation grounds, the zoo. We had lunch at the Rambagh Palace, formerly the home of the last Maharajah of Jaipur now a splendid hotel. We were driven around in bicycle-rickshaws and three-wheeled taxis. We found ourselves, finally, at the foot of a steep hill leading up to the Amber Fort, a more ancient home of the maharajahs of Jaipur.

There are two ways up to the Fort: foot or elephant. Although I am naturally a walker, genetically pre-disposed to climb things, I recommend ascent by elephant. The road is lined by a high wall impossible to see over, unless you are on top of something big—an elephant for example.

Sonia and Marjie sat on one side of the howdah and I sat on the other, legs dangling. The driver sat at the front crouched over the elephant's head. Our patient, creaking ascent took about fifteen minutes. At the top we passed through an archway and into a large courtyard with a beautiful lawn in the center.

Dozens of schoolchildren were picnicking and began waving at Sonia and Marjie. Sonia and Marjie waved back. Way on the other side of the elephant, I gradually became aware that a small, genial, riot was in progress. The children were jumping, shouting, waving furiously. They nearly rushed the elephant (unflappable except for the ears).

After we'd dismounted (at an elephant dock) one of the Fort's guides approached us and told us why the kids were so excited. Simply, the children had waved at everyone coming into the courtyard, but only my friends had waved back. Naturally, the children were thrilled to get a response at last.

I stood there for awhile feeling quite stupid as I considered a few obvious truths. Of course, solemnity can easily be mistaken for aloofness, even disdain. Cultural respectfulness isn't respectful at all if it denies common human impulses like curiosity and friendliness. Wealth may impose barriers, but they're not impermeable.

In Jaipur I resolved to set my self-consciousness aside.

So at the crossroads in Udaipur, on the ferries of Cochin, among the rock-carvings of Mahabalipuram, whenever I saw the curious stares of women in saris or schoolgirls in uniforms and dazzling blue hair-ribbons I met their eyes and smiled. And they smiled back—a much better meeting than guilt with incomprehension.

It was the most important thing I brought home with me, a very simple lesson, learned ten thousand miles away. Better late than never.

...

Glossary

salwar kameez - tunic and pants worn by women

alu chat - spiced boiled potato snack

zenana - women's quarters



Sometime earlier this summer I was at a show at a local bar called the Blind Pig gabbing with a few of my male friends when some guy came up and struck up a conversation with my friend Paul. He had a stack of flyers in his hand for a Pegboy show and started passing them out to everyone. Except to me. I even asked for a flyer but he either didn't hear me or simply ignored me. I was the only female, rather "coat hanger", in the group I was standing with as well as the only person who didn't receive a flyer. I was a bit irritated but didn't want to jump down the guy's throat so I let it pass.

The next morning, my friend Jenni asked me, "Did you hear what happened to me and Kate last night at the Blind Pig?" She proceeded

to describe the same situation: she and Kate were sitting at a table with 3 or 4 male friends and some guy gave all the males flyers for the same show but not to Jenni or Kate. Incredulous, I told her what had happened to me and we sat around fuming for a bit, not believing that it had been some kind of strange coincidence that the same thing had happened to all 3 of us involving the same guy.

A week or two after that incident, I was at the punk picnic in Chicago sitting on some rocks by the beach so the cops couldn't see my pals and I chugging down whatever cheap beer we were drinking. A guy passing out flyers for an anarchist gathering in Oregon came up to us. He started chatting it up with my friend Burton and I held my hand out for a flyer but didn't get one. All of the males I was sitting with got one. Granted, you don't always want to give a flyer to everyone in a group of people but I was the only one holding my hand out for one fer chrissakes. Again, I didn't say anything to him.

I suppose I shouldn't be surprised. Even though anarchists and punks are more outspoken than most people on the evils of sexism, that does not mean that they are not merely PC crusaders. By PC I mean spewing rhetoric and attempting to rid society of the symptoms of sexism (by changing the spelling of words like "women" or by replacing certain phrases with euphemisms) rather than addressing the actual problem itself. Everyone runs around with their hollow slogans and denounces the wickedness of rape and domestic violence while not paying attention to daily interaction between people. I have never been raped or beaten by a male or flat out told I couldn't do something because of my sex but I have felt it in countless other more subtle ways. After seeing an episode of 20/20 showing a male and female with the exact same credentials trying to do everyday things like buy a car and get a job and comparing the way they were treated makes me believe that I am probably discriminated against, maybe unknowingly by the perpetrator, unbeknownst to me because I have nothing to compare it to. In 20/20, there would have been no way to tell that the female was treated with less respect and taken less seriously than the male except for the fact that "hidden camera" footage was compared and contrasted in hindsight.

This is not to say that every male should walk on eggshells when dealing with females or that females should constantly be on the lookout for anything that could be interpreted as sexist. Instead, males should simply be aware that even though they believe sexism is wrong, there are still certain stereotypes and attitudes that are ingrained in them that come out in little ways and females should not be naive about the fact that sexism really is a problem. It may not be looming and enormous in everybody's lives but it exists and, at least for me, when I see it in punks and anarchists especially, it's really frustrating. Not that hoots and catcalls and awful billboards with Kate Moss on them don't piss me off but those are pretty obviously sexist whereas subtle daily interactions and slights aren't quite as overt. The latter is what pisses me off the most actually because I take that shit personally and it REALLY offends me (which says a lot because it's pretty damn hard to offend me).

OOOH SHEEP

Last night my friend Colleen told me a bunch of her friends were going to a local bar called Kams dressed in drag. That may not sound

all that titillating but Kams is one of 2 bars that are located next to each other that are front to back, inside out, through and through frat bars. Delighted at the prospect of seeing a large group of men with painted faces, braided hair and evening gowns and women wearing ties and penciled moustaches surrounded by the all-too powerful (at least on this campus) boys in baseball caps and girls in short skirts, I agreed to go to Kams with her.

Standing in the long line to get in which is permanently formed in front of Kams and CO Daniels (the other frat bar), I started feeling a little weird. I was hoping no one I knew would walk by and see me holding my I.D. out in that line. Okay, I was actually wearing a disguise and hiding under Colleen's coat. When I walked into the bar, I stepped into another world that was completely alien and utterly distasteful. I didn't even know any of the people that were dressed in drag and everyone else was someone I probably didn't have a whole lot in common with, to put it very mildly.

I remembered the time in high school when my sister, Jenny, and I had gotten free tickets to see Miss Saigon. My dad was a frequent advertiser in Chicago Magazine and they had offered these tickets to people like my dad as well as a free bus ride and complimentary hors d'oeuvres at a club/bar called the Hat Dance. My sister and I were dropped off at the Hat Dance and were immediately horrified. Every last person there was between the ages of 25 and 70 and were all wearing Armani suits and Donna Karan or Chanel dresses and were dripping with gaudy jewelry. Jenny and I were all dandied up in our nicest clothes but of course we still looked like the complete slobbs we are. Almost before the door had time to close we were back outside, me for an extended cigarette break and Jenny for a breath of air that didn't include CK1 and Old Spice (or whatever filthy rich guys sprinkle all over their expensive faces and necks). I had never felt so completely out of place and in a situation so far removed from the reality I wanted to be a part of. This (and the instinctual slime of mild distaste) was how I felt at Kams.

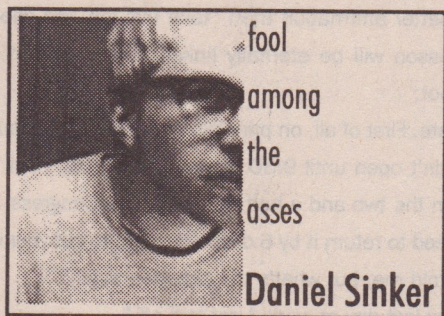
Everybody at Kams looked like they had been manufactured at some kind of Greek system factory. All the guys were wearing jeans or cords, some form of a t-shirt, and a baseball cap with Greek letters emblazoned across it. All the gals were wearing next to nothing in the form of 1) a midriff shirt or 2) a skin tight sleeveless dress (keep in mind it was about thirteen degrees outside). As soon as Colleen and I walked in, every male in the place was instantly scoping us out. Since our breasts and asses weren't hanging out of our clothes and we weren't wearing any makeup, I'm sure we were immediately written off with the occasional nudges and "what the hell are they doing here? Do they think THEY'RE going to get picked up?"s.

Colleen was having fun with her buddies but I was getting really weirded out so I went outside and waited in the car for her. In my car, I asked myself for the hundredth time why the hell anybody would want their lives to be like that. I also swore to myself that I would never set foot in a place like that again voluntarily (unless it was for a shitload of money). During the drive home, we recounted the only funny moment of the (me-five, her-fifteen) minutes we were at Kams. Colleen's comment to a couple boys in drag: "Hey, I'm surprised you guys haven't gotten the

shit kicked out of you yet." Their response: "Well, everyone's been pretty nice to us because they all think it's some kind of pledge thing."

DESCENDENTS

By the time this is printed, you may be sick of hearing people rave about the Descendents but I don't care. They've been my favorite band for the past 7 or 8 years so I feel the need to say something about them. I got their new album "Everything Sucks" the day after it was released. That was probably the only time I ever paid attention to any sort of release date because I'm not much of a record collector. Anyway, upon first listen, I thought, "Wait a minute, this sounds like All!" (my friend Joe also thought the same at first too so I'm not crazy). But now that I've listened to it a hundred times more, I'm in love with it. There are a few very minor changes to their sound (different types of backup vocals, Milo's voice sometimes sounds gruffer than on their other albums) but overall, it's the same great shit. Juvenile, lovey-dovey, sensitive, thoughtful, fun, silly, and catchy, just like all their previous recordings (but a little more well produced). This album reproves to me that the Descendents (especially considering the almost decade-long gap between released albums) are the best fucking band ever. I don't give a shit what their intentions are for getting back together; to me they are the one and only band that can do no wrong. I'm pretty damn excited to see them for the first time and hear all the songs I've loved for almost half my life played live. Yeah, so I'm 20 and didn't hear them until they broke up. Shoot me.



It was raining, which in and of itself wasn't anything new, as it had been raining for weeks, perhaps months. It was the kind of rain that you don't really notice after a while, more of a mist really; water droplets just hanging in the air for days on end. You go about your business on days like that, any complaints of the rain would just be met with strange stares, "it's raining?" But, technically it was raining.

And we were walking in it. We weren't going anywhere in particular, just walking along Cortland; possibly towards the video store; maybe just to the steel factory; maybe nowhere at all.

We had met up a few hours earlier at the corner bar for drinks. It's a place I like to go whether I'm drinking or not. It's run by a pair of gruff old ladies and seems to be lit by a single 75 watt bulb. Booths line the walls, and while I've heard it can get pretty packed on weekends, I've never been there when more than three booths are full. Some people would say it's a place with a lot of character, others

would say it's just creepy. It's right around the corner from my house and it's got a great jukebox, so I just say lets go. And so we did. I had two Bass and she had three Tequilas plus a couple of beers.

...

Hard drinkers impress me. They always have. Having grown up in the shadow of alcoholism (both sides of the family, as far back as records can go), I was never much of a drinker, but I was always fascinated with the drink. Until fairly recently, I abstained entirely from drinking. Then I made a decision—of sound mind and body, mind you—to start drinking as soon as possible. Working 17 hour days will do that to you. Working 48 hours straight will do it to you even more. Working on Punk Planet will do it to you for sure.

...

Above the counter is a large oxblood-colored padded overhang which houses a couple fish tanks, assorted knickknacks, and the ubiquitous beer-themed clock. The women that tend the bar decorate the overhang according to the holiday. Tonight it reads "Happy Halloween" and is covered with fake cobwebs, which give the place the appearance of breaking every health department code in the book. In a few weeks it will read "Merry Christmas" and the walls of the place will be decorated with crape-paper bricks. The overhang itself will be covered with cottonballs, which will stay up until Valentines day.

I couldn't tell if she liked the joint or not, as she seemed more interested in the Tequila than the ambiance of the place.

Sometimes I get too wrapped up in details.

I barely knew her. We had gone out maybe once before, and that was to a movie, so it barely counts. She was new in town, and I was new at this. Would you call it dating? I'm not sure.

I never have been.

"I feel like I can be myself around you," she said, her eyes seemed to amplify the light in the bar, sparkling in the darkness.

I feel like I can be someone else.

...

I only considered myself straightedge for two weeks during my sophomore year of high school. It was in 1989 and the legacy of the '88 New York Hardcore tougher-than-you was still big in Chicago. I heard that a guy was having straightedge meetings in his house, so along with some friends I went to one. I knew that I was in the wrong scene the minute I walked through the door. With hair halfway down my back, wearing bell-bottoms and ratty army parka, I knew I was in the wrong scene. Heads swiveled and stared at me. "Who's that clown?" I heard someone ask.

...

As we left the bar we were both a bit tipsy, but she was definitely more drunk than I was. We walked along, laughing a lot.

It was raining, which in and of itself wasn't anything new, as it had been raining for weeks, perhaps months.

And we were walking in it.

And it didn't matter at all.

...

I talked to my friend Janelle in the beginning of the summer. During our conversation, which was mostly about my inability to get dates, she

gave me a single piece of advice, "everything I am I owe to alcohol." What I think she meant was that everything she's ever done that requires an extra hit of gumption and bravery, she's done while under the influence. I'm beginning to think that she may right on.

...

We came to a bridge. It's my favorite bridge in Chicago, a small drawbridge spanning a small part of the ass end of the Chicago river. The drawbridge isn't manned anymore—it probably hasn't been manned for years—as the only boats traveling this end of the river are huge cement barges hauling scrap metal and gravel. The bridge, however, offers a breathtaking view of the Chicago skyline along with a beautiful view of the river which, at least under the cover of night-fall, looks calm and inviting (that it's highly polluted and probably toxic to humans is a story for another day). Unprompted, she stops mid-way across the bridge. She looks out over the water and then back at me.

"Let's have a spitting contest," she says her eyes soaking in all the light around us and shooting it all back out.

And so we did. Both of us hocking, heaving, and letting fly one after another. The saliva shot from each of our mouths out into the sky in front of us, arcing slowing before starting its long descent into the murky water below.

We kept an eye on our spit all the way down, ready to yell "mine was farther" as loud as we could the minute it hit the water. And yell we did, each one claiming that their saliva was the one that went the distance. Each one knowing that half way down, once the spit balls had begun to separate and shrink, we had lost track of which one belonged to who.

But we had to hold our own, you always have to root for the home team, be it basketball or saliva. So we started arguing about who won the contest, but we were smiling the whole time. Then, before I knew what was happening, she had started to climb up the bridge. Twenty-five feet in the air and yelling "it's beautiful up here!" at the top of her lungs; I could only think of the Promise Ring, "I'm convinced that you're from Mars." Twenty-five feet up and she could have been in outer space, with me down on earth looking up, stunned, unable to figure out who she was, only knowing that she was something else. That this was something else. That this moment was everything; something not to be spoiled by whatever may lay ahead. "I'm convinced that you're from Mars."

She climbed back down and we walked back to her house. A handshake and I was gone. As it should be. As it could be?

I've only seen her a few times in the months since then, but I cross the bridge almost every day. Each time I do, I spit over the edge and smile.

...

As always, all mail can be sent to Dan Sinker PO Box 1559 Chicago IL 60690. Responses will be fashionably late—would you expect anything less?



Pooh hasn't much of a brain but he never comes to any harm.

He does silly things and they turn out right.

—Piglet

I'd spent many a lunch hour at Broadway Costume perusing their massive selection. They had everything. You could walk in there on any given day with \$60 in your pocket and walk out looking like anybody or anything you wanted. It's mildly telling that I chose Winnie the Pooh. Perhaps more telling are the thousands of characters I didn't chose. For months I'd been trying to come up with a reason to rent a suit, but nothing seemed to warrant such a move. Then, thank god, I lost my job.

...

I didn't get to my desk until just after 10 a.m. It was my last day and for the 12 days since being told I was getting laid off, I'd been living by the clichéd, though still soothing, mantra, (sing along, you know the words) "What are they going to do? Fire me?"

It's a better affirmation than "take this job and shove it," which for some reason will be eternally linked in my head to the monster truck Big Foot.

I was late. First of all, on principle and secondly because Broadway Costume didn't open until 9:30. It was a good half hour to get suited up and down the two and a half blocks to 300 Congress.

"You need to return it by 6 o'clock tonight to get your deposit back. I know you told me, but what's the occasion again?"

"It's my last day at work. I got laid off."

I wonder if anybody who was ever laid off showed up on time for their last day. Or didn't leave early.

I kind of stumbled my way into the office and bumbled across the room to my desk, lacking peripheral vision due to the smallish, veiled mouth opening I was trying to see out of. I couldn't see anybody. I could only gauge my co-workers reactions by sound, and it sounded just about like I wanted it to. Loud "Oh my God"'s and lots of hysterical laughter followed by frantic dialings of extensions and commands to "Get down here quick!"

...

Upon hearing of my impending unemployment a good friend informed me that sperm donation will fetch you \$50 a visit. You can visit up to 3 times a week, if you pass the physical.

"Did uh... you...uh... do that?"

"No, I didn't meet the requirements."

Fearing the most intimate of reasons I decided to let this topic go,

but my friend informed me he flunked because was too short and his vision was too bad. The irony of being rejected from paid masturbation because you're already blind is just too rich.

...

The orange fur suit was saggy so we stuffed the ass and tummy with plastic bubble rap. It was about 1000 degrees in there, and the heat wasn't dissipating very well. I half thought by the end of the day I would be in the best shape of my life, but I only managed to sweat off about 4 pounds. I knew wrastlin' kids in high school who used to walk around wearing plastic garbage bags for a week to sweat off some pounds in hopes of making a lower weight class. I always thought they were idiots, but here I was, kind of inadvertently doing it, but with much more style. Of course my means weren't going to end with me rolling around on the floor in front of a bunch of my cheering classmates half naked with some other dehydrated repressed homosexual, but my suffering did have a subtle, more personal payoff.

I wanted to leave this job feeling good about it, despite my untimely termination and the shabby handling of the whole affair (I didn't even get the legally required two weeks notice). I wasn't holding any grudges towards anyone in particular. Picking out the inept in that place is a lot like shooting fish in a barrel. I mean seriously, if your operation is way over budget and way short on funds, what sense does it make to cut the lowest man on the totem pole? I was working part time for \$10 an hour doing a job that, in most places gets compensated \$15 to \$25 an hour. If you're financially in bad shape, what sense does it make to cut the part time help who you're getting at a bargain basement rate? Who's ass is my measly \$200 a week going to save? No ones. But like I said, I'm not holding a grudge. I'm not even upset. As I expressed to most of my co-workers (I like referring to them as "the survivors") what do you expect from a bunch of suits? These are baby-boomers who cut their teeth on Reaganomics. Short of covering their own asses, I don't expect them to know what the hell they're doing. They were always pretty nice to me, and that's about all I could ask for. I had my friends, the rest of the people were just marginal characters in the whole scheme of things. At best non-offensive. At worst, still non-offensive. I wanted to leave with a good feeling about them all regardless of their position on my mental food chain.

Admittedly I'm no good with goodbyes, and I try not to hold people up to a higher standard than I hold myself (that's a lie) so I wasn't at all looking forward to the rounds and rounds of fake fond farewells my last day promised. Especially because they would mostly be performed by those marginal characters and filled with false sentiment. Everybody wishing me well, and telling me they know I'll do great at whatever I do, and I'm so talented and yeah yeah yeah, pass the mic already would ya? I mean, sure those things are all true, but those people aren't close enough to me to have acquired that knowledge, so as far as they know, it's all just courtesy talking with no real emotion to back it up. This I didn't think I could endure. I needed an out.

I liked the irony of having all these people trying to be falsely sincere to me on my last day, but having to do so while staring into the huge lifeless eyes of a seven foot Pooh Bear.

...

Upon hearing of my impending unemployment a good friend told me she knew someone who might have some freelance work for me. He worked for the Democratic Party, and they needed a poster designed right away for a function Hilary Clinton was to attend the following week. They would re-use the poster for other events with the President, and Senators down the road. It would be on T.V. and in the paper. Sounded kind of fun, or at least like something to write about, so I called and we arranged to meet the following day to talk it over. After discussing what they wanted and me assuring them I could handle the design, and yes, I could get it designed and output, all ready to go in four days (that, by the way, is an insane rush for this job) he informed me that "We (presumably the democratic party) don't really have any money to pay you with. You'll just have to think of it like you're doing it for the cause."

The Democratic Party can spring for rivers of free booze and mountains of cheesecake at their convention, but they can't scrape up a little something for a recently laid off struggling taxpayer who's trying to stay off the public dole? And besides, it's not even my cause!

"We don't have any money."

Everybody knows Politicians are broke, just like us common people.

My search for meaningful, important work continues.

...

I've been peeing in the sink all day. The boombox is sitting on the toilet and I don't feel like moving it. Moving it means putting it on the sink, which is a precarious balancing act I am right now not in the mood to perform. It's 3 p.m. I've peed six times since I got up at noon. That would be the three Diet Coke breakfast exacting it's fee.

It's a lot easier to collect unemployment than I thought it was going to be. To collect all I had to do was fill out a form giving them my address, where I've worked for the last 18 months, and answers to a couple of questions about my old job. Much easier than I thought. Some places you can even do it over the phone. There was no line, no sweltering heat, no screaming babies (somebody watches too much T.V.) and I was in and out in about 20 minutes. I have to keep a record of my job search and give a weekly report of my attempts to find a new job, but other than that this is really nothing at all.

And it isn't much of a test to enjoy. \$120 a week cuz I told em I wanted it. After rent, and the phone bill, and the minimum payment on two credit cards I've got \$20 a week left. Three Diet Cokes a day at 95 cents each, times 7 days equals \$19.95 and lots of Magnum PI.

...

One of the suits at work told me, told Pooh, in the way of a macho goodbye, to "Go out there and raise a lot of hell."

Making \$120 a week (plus \$50 a yank), peeing in the sink, staring at myself in the mirror, rapping every word along with RUN-DMC's Raising Hell, I'm thinking about how cool it is to be me.

"Kickin and tickin while you're having a ball, like chicken finger lickin I'll be lickin you all."

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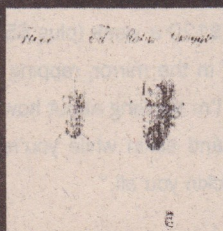
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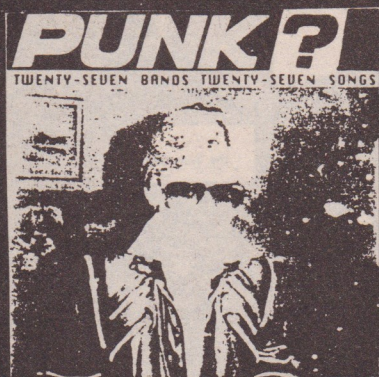
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Filmmaker Sarah Jacobson makes no-budget movies that contain more honesty and truth than the largest budget in the world could buy.

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Interview & Illustrations by Daniel Sinker

PP: Were you expecting *I Was a Teenage Serial Killer* to have the impact that it did?

S: Not at all! I remember I showed it to my class, and they were all like "I don't get it... it's really violent...what were you trying to do..." But there was this one girl there who said "I think this film is important!" And because she said that, it sort of gave me this confidence like, "maybe if she thinks this way maybe other people will." At first I thought no one was going to take the film seriously. Luckily for me, people really got into what the movie said. All these people around San Francisco were writing about it and wanted to do interviews. It was kind of strange that so many people wanted to talk to me about it and put it in print because there were not that many girl filmmakers—there's still not—and it was really rare that something would come out where you could actually follow a story. I was really influenced by Dischord and K records and I was like "if all these people can do this, why can't I?" So I started Station Wagon Productions and I started selling copies of my film out of my bedroom through mail-order, and every time one of these reporters would write a piece, I would ask them if they could include the address and how much the film cost. It started off in smaller magazines and eventually we got a lot of coverage in *Film Threat*. The best thing that happened was that it got into *Sassy*! That was so incredible because when I was growing up I never thought that I was the type of girl that would ever be in a teen-girl magazine! It was this total vindication from being this nerd girl, I probably took it more seriously than most people would, but I was reading *Sassy* at the time—this was back when it was still a cool magazine.

PP: Back when they stuck Ian Sveonius who was in the *Nation of Ulysses* at the time, on the cover as "Sassiest Boy of the Year."

S: I was looking at these women *Sassy* was writing about back then, and it was like, "wow, I could belong to this kind of scene, this is something that I could be a part of." And then when I actually became a part of it, it was so great. Growing up as a girl into punk rock music, I was never really pretty, I was never into makeup or fashion, I always felt really alienated, I was someone who would have to stand on the sides and look in at everybody who was doing everything. I never felt that I could be the one doing stuff, unless I was going out with somebody in a band, which obviously wasn't going to happen.

PP: How much did your background of being into indie stuff and punk stuff influence the way you did your film? I know for me it was really strange to go from being involved in a punk scene from a pretty early age, where everyone is doing something, to going to an art school where everyone is sitting around waiting for something to happen. It was really a shock, I wanted to yell, "what the fuck are you people doing? You're not going to get a fucking grant, this shit isn't going to happen, just fucking do it!"

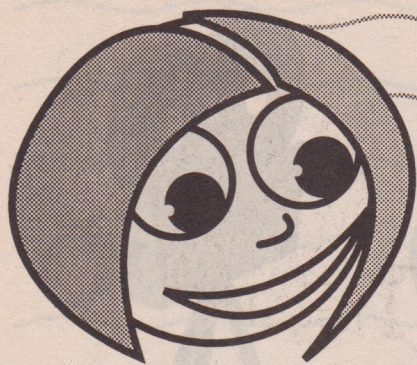
S: Everybody thinks that though. Everybody thinks that some fairy godmother is going to come along and bop them on the head and say "look, you're cool," and its so not true! Everyone I know that is successful works so hard. People don't realize that, they just think it happens. Even if you get really successful, even if you get this huge company behind you, they still make you go to a million interviews and do all this bullshit crap. No matter what you do, it's work. Nothing seems like its an actual or total scam. But to respond to what you were saying, there were people in my life that were involved in music or punk or stuff like that. I

Sarah Jacobson

Fuck

I'm coming from. If people don't understand why the

You



They say that for guys it takes one and for girls it's more like three to

never really considered myself a punk, I was just this geeky girl who show up and hang out and follow everyone else around. I never felt like I was a part of it; I never dyed my hair green, or had a mohawk. It was more about going to shows and the social aspect of hanging out. I didn't start getting into the music until I was older. I had this friend Steve who ran this cassette-only label out of his living room. He totally inspired me because he was just making these cassettes on a four-track in his living room and taking out little ads in Maximum Rock & Roll and everything. From seeing him do all this stuff, I was like, "why can't I do this with video?" Looking back, it seems like punk was really influential. One of the reasons I was attracted to that scene was because I was going to a really conservative high school and to meet a punk rocker and have them tell you about socialism, or even to just meet someone who's taking 20 Dextrim just to get off! After going to a little Molly Ringwald high school meeting people like that was really exciting. When you're 14, you're just like "oh my god, this is so cool!" When I got older, and learned a little bit about the people behind the scenes and how they did stuff, I got this idea of "if I wait for someone to say, 'okay, you're cool' I could be waiting forever so why don't I just do what I want to do and if people like it, fine, and if they don't, whatever. At least I will have done something, I will have finished something."

PP: How old where you when you started work on I Was A Teenage Serial Killer?

S: I started making it when I was 19 and when I finished it I was 21. It's weird. When I look back now, I never think, "oh, I was only 21 when I did that." because I felt so old. And now I'm 25 and I've just finished my first feature and I'm so old I can't get away with the young excuse anymore! I never felt that I was young, I just thought it was a great excuse for when I really messed up! It's like only when you get older and you look back... I kind of forget how old I was when I did Serial Killer because it feels like everything I do is right now. In a way I feel like

my early twenties just vanished because it took me three years to do Mary Jane's Not a Virgin Anymore! All of a sudden it's like, "wow, I'm 25!" During the time I was doing this movie, most people were going out, dating, drinking at bars, hanging out, having a social life and meeting people and just having fun. I just can't believe that I'm 25 because I started Mary Jane when I was 22, and I've sort of always thought of myself as someone that is 22. Thank god I actually finished the movie before I turned 25!

PP: Would you consider going to Hollywood to make films?

S: What got me into filmmaking, was that I'd imagine these stories in my head all the time about these really great women, and I'd never see them in movies. You just wait and wait and wait to see a women character in a film where you're like "wow, she's really cool." When I think about all the movies I've seen and I think about how rare that is, I didn't want to wait for someone else to do it, it was obvious that that wasn't going to happen. So I said "I'll just do it, I want to do this." If I met with Hollywood studios and they told me that "we want to take this out, or we want to soften this up because it's too feminist or too harsh." I wouldn't want to deal with those kind of people because they wouldn't support what I do. But there's a feeling in Hollywood right now, and I'm not sure how genuine it is or not, but people are so freaked out in Hollywood because of how well the First Wives Club did.

PP: Which always makes you wonder...

S: It was weird. I went to see that film with my mom and my sister, and we were going to go out for a nice meal afterwards, and all these women were at the film with their aunts and their grandmothers! It was this special occasion, it was a big deal, it was so mind-blowing! There were about six guys in the audience. Just the fact that the national audience for that film was almost all women and it still made money, I mean why should you try to pander to make sure that you have an acceptable male audience for your film? If it makes money why should Hollywood care who's coming to see it?

PP: Hollywood puts out tons of movies and you know they don't care if there's an acceptable women's audience! It seems like 99% of the shit that comes out is filled with this misogynist crap. They don't care about whether women like it or not.

S: It's not something they care about, it's not something that has been an issue for Hollywood. I've had my best luck when I work with people who believe in me and who are supportive of what I'm doing, and if they're not, I just won't work with them. Sometimes that's been really hard. There are people who have been interested in my films and have had all this money, but if they don't understand where I'm coming from, fuck you. When we were trying to finish Mary Jane, there were a lot of people who were like, "I have all this money I want to see your film because maybe I can help you finish it." Even though I was desperate for money to get the movie finished, it didn't occur to me that I should take it because it seemed like this person didn't get it and wouldn't finish the movie in a way that it deserved, and it would get ruined because of it. I was never specific about the kind of money I had to get, but it ended up working out, we ended up getting some really cool people behind the film that really believed in it. That's important.

PP: Are you trying to get a distributor for Mary Jane instead of taking the route you did with Serial Killer, of doing it all out of your bedroom?

S: With Mary Jane, we've only shown it a couple of times, and right now all the distributors are waiting to see if we get into the Sundance Film Festival, and to see how it does there. The distributors don't know what to do with a film like this. The way it's put together is so raw, it's not an easy sale. You don't see something like this on TV. It's not an established market, they don't know where or how to sell it so that they'll make money off of it, and that's what distributors are looking for. I'm pretty confident that it'll do well, 'cause it's getting a lot of attention and all these people are getting excited about it, but I'm thinking "am I going to have to distribute this myself again?" because if I have to I will, but hopefully there are some people that have a good enough vision that they can see that they can take a film that's about women and aimed towards women and do something with it. I'm hoping that I don't have to do all the work myself because it's tiring and I want to start on my next movie.

PP: It's funny to me that you referred to Mary Jane as being "raw" because in comparison to Serial Killer, it's really fucking clean!

S: I keep waiting for someone to say, "you sold out man!"

PP: Have you gotten any of that?

to three years to make their next movie five years, and I don't want to wait!

S: No one's been like "oh, this is so slick." Actually, I was a little worried when I started seeing the dailies come in, I was like "oh my god, this is really slick! Am I selling out? Is this going to be a totally lame Hollywood-style film?" Which is funny now, when you talk to industry professionals and they are like "oh my god this is so out of left field, we don't even know what to do with it!" In a way, you have to prove that people can accept it and they can take it. The greatest response I've gotten so far have been girls that have been so psyched about the movie! I've only shown Mary Jane three times and the first two times the audio has been messed up, and I've said to people "how can you think that was great, the sound was horrible!" And they're always like "oh, I don't care, I want to see it again!"

PP: The hardest thing for me is to distance yourself from things like that. I know with my own video work, there's a sequence where the audio is totally fucked up and when I screen it, people don't even notice it, and I'm sitting there with my hands over my ears!

S: That's the thing I learned with *Serial Killer* is that sometimes people just don't care about things like that, they'll be like "oh, whatever."

PP: How much of the aesthetics of *Serial Killer* and *Mary Jane*—because aesthetically they're really far apart—was done on purpose, and how much was just due to the method you used to produce the two films?

S: It's funny because with both films, I didn't really think about it. With *Serial Killer*, I was really pissed off and I felt like I just had to do this movie and I didn't really think about how it was going to happen. I just thought that I'd do it and see what happens. For *Mary Jane* too, I didn't really think about a visual aesthetic, I didn't have much time to plot out camera blocking. The thing I wanted to prove after a movie like *Serial Killer* was that I could do a movie where the characters were believable and the acting was really good and you cared about these people. So I put all my energy into meeting with the actors and talking about what their characters were and where they were coming from and all these things. I put all my attention to that. I'd rather have a film that has better acting and better characters and a better story behind it and not have as many dolly moves or crane shots. I'm so excited at how the characters turned out, they're really believable. With locations, it was just whatever we could

get. I didn't have an art director or anything. It was all like, "okay Beth, we're shooting in your room, let's rearrange these posters and hopefully I can get the camera far enough back to fit it all in." A lot of it is just out of necessity, but I guess it's uncool to say that.

PP: No it's not!

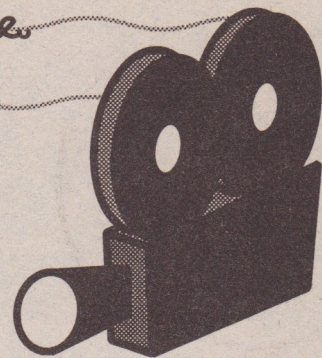
S: A lot of people are like "oh, I had this certain visual idea, blah blah blah."

PP: No, it's all about necessity.

S: It is all about necessity. We shot the film for so little money. Making a film is so expensive and there's not that much you can do about it. Film is the medium I chose and it's an expensive medium and for what I'm trying to do the amount we spent is nothing at all!

PP: So what are you working on now? I know you said that you wanted to get onto your next film.

S: Everyone always says that you should have your next script ready so you can jump into your next thing. Especially for girls, if you don't have an idea lined up, it can be pretty bad. The girls that did *Go Fish*, it took them three years to even get a second one started. Jenny Livingston, who did the movie *Paris is Burning*, it's been five years and she still can't get a project off the ground! That movie made so much money you'd think she could walk into any office and be like "I want this amount to make this movie," but she can't. They say that for guys it takes one to three years to make their next movie and for girls it's more like three to five years, and I don't want to wait. I definitely want to do my next film. I want to do a film about a girl who's trying to make something successful, trying to make things happen for herself on a professional level. And so I've been trying to figure out what girls I even know anymore, because I've been so isolated! The only people I've been in contact with have been people in bands, so I think it would be perfect to do a film about a girl band that's on the verge of being really big. I've been able to interview people like Beth Ellen, who's in *Mary Jane* and she's in the *Loudmouths* now, she used to be in *Cockpit*; Katy Adler who's in *Cockpit*; I got to interview Kim Gordon from *Sonic Youth*; I'm going to Minneapolis in two days to interview Babes in Toyland, they're going on a mini tour and they're letting me tag along. I want to make it really realistic, to me that's really important.



That's what's next, although I'm not sure where the money's going to come from. I'm still working on the script, and doing research. I'm hoping that the same sort of spark that happened with *Serial Killer* and *Mary Jane* comes along, 'cause you always kind of feel like a fake! You know? You're doing all this stuff and no one really knows that this is all a big cosmic mistake.

PP: So now, if you were telling people how to start making films, what would you tell them? Not necessarily films that will be white hot, and get tons of press but...

S: I think the most important thing is to take it one step at a time. If you look at someone like Robert Rodriguez, even though he went to school, he started doing super-8 movies and video movies when he was a kid. He'd had so much practice that he was able to make *El Mariachi* for so cheap, because he could bring all that experience to it. People who have access to video cameras or super-8 cameras and get an early start, it helps you. You don't have to do these huge amazing things, just by doing anything you learn how to convey information through moving images, which is a whole lot harder than it sounds—it's like a whole new language. That's the greatest thing about film is that it's a form of communication; you have a chance to really powerfully say what you want to say. To me that's the most important thing about it: it's not about being in magazines or going to festivals, it's not about being this cool persona, it's about having a chance to say something and get your message across. When I say this sometimes people misunderstand me and think I'm saying that everything has to be political, which I'm not saying at all. I'm saying that here's your chance to get what you're thinking across. Practice on how to do that. Take it small, be ambitious and make yourself fail. There were so many times working on *Mary Jane* that I fell flat on my face. You have to let yourself look like a total idiot and be completely miserable, as long as you're able to pick yourself up and have back at it! ☺

damnation

THERE ARE A LOT OF PEOPLE THAT WILL KNOW A LOT MORE PAIN THAN THEY WILL COVE.

WE'RE ALL FUCKED.

NO MORE DREAMS OF HAPPY ENDINGS, THE FULL-LENGTH OFFERING FROM WASHINGTON D.C.'S DAMNATION A.D. IS ONE OF THOSE ALBUMS THAT TURNS YOU INWARD. IT'S VERY HARD TO IMAGINE ITS AUTHORS AS BEING ANYTHING BUT MISERABLE. I SAT UPON THIS NOTION UNCOMFORTABLY, OPPOSITE KEN OLDEN, DAMNATION A.D.'S CHIEF SONGWRITER, ON A PARTICULARLY LAID BACK AFTERNOON AT THE MIDDLE EAST IN CAMBRIDGE. INTERVIEW BY JACOB IRON HIKE.

I've been listening to your new album a lot. It's painful. It's a very hard album to listen to. Now on the surface you guys seem very down to earth and easy going. What prompted you to dig out what you eventually laid on the table and immortalized into song?

I'm personally very easy going and for the most part very positive.

Do you think that attitude is the result of this medium that allows you to purge all of your frustrations?

Perhaps. I think that Damnation a.d. is a reflection of how I feel some of the time. Words Collide [Ken and Hillel of Damnation a.d.'s first band] were said to have sounded eerie. I think Damnation a.d. is similar but on a darker level. "No More Dreams" is definitely representative of how I feel sometimes. It's not an entirely literal thing. It's not like I'm about to just give up. I'm motivated to do a lot of things but not necessarily for some goal. I think a lot of people go through life without focusing on the big picture.

So what are your goals? Do you have any?

Nothing that I can really envision. I enjoy what I'm doing now and I work hard at it. I guess I'm not all that emotional on the surface.

I disagree. I think that you have to be in order to put what you have into song.

Don't get me wrong. Someone who knows me knows that I'm not apt to express a lot of negative energy. I get irritated but I rarely ever get pissed off. I'm always in a pretty good mood.

Does that side of you ever make its way into song?

As far as the lyrics go, they all have a lot to do with love. Personally "No More Dreams" and a lot of the other songs all revolve around the idea that there may only be one person on this earth that's your match and there's a good chance that you'll never find that person.

I no longer believe in the idea of unadulterated love.

Well I believe in it but I don't think that most people, including myself, will ever experience it.

I just came out of a four year relationship, where in the end I found I was lying to myself. I was telling myself that this was "it." I guess that it was only an attempt to make it actually work out. Of course it didn't.

Well that's what some people have to do but I can't—lying to myself means lying to other people and I don't think that I'm capable of that anymore. So lyrically it's the frustration of all that. "No More Dreams of Happy Endings," that's it right there to a tee.

So have you ever been in a situation like that? Where you found yourself existing in the middle of a lie?

Once.

How long did it last?

Years. Too long. And when it all came down and the reality of it all settled in, I realized that not only did I not love this person but I hadn't loved anyone.

So what makes you think that love exists if you've never experienced it?

I can just imagine it. I don't think it's all that hard to imagine somebody that's just right for you. I'm a very quirky person, so it may be harder to imagine somebody who's just right for me, but that's my own frustration. Even more so it's my own frustration with the fact that I can't be with someone that I'm not 100% about—that's really the problem—the frustration of not having what you know is out there. It may well be

someone that you will never meet. Everything else in the world will no longer matter if you have that someone.

Well what about music? To me it's more important, more reliable. If it lets you down, there's so much more to fall back on.

My love of music is strange. I've envisioned myself not doing it. That may sound crazy...

...but even if you're not playing it...

I would never not listen to it or not participate on some sort of level.

Music just seems like more of a constant, rather than the whole myth of this "perfect being" that you spend your entire life with.

Well, that seems to be more like a dream than a myth. A lot of the lyrics that I write revolve around that very issue.

So that's the theme of the album?

I think it works as the theme of this band as well. Everyone is eventually going to be—I don't want to sound too negative—but everyone in this world is going to end up getting screwed. We're all fucked. We share this world with people who don't care about anyone but themselves; in the end everyone ends up being shortchanged. That plays into the idea that there are a lot of people that will know a lot more pain than they will love.

If that's the situation, then what's the sense in making any attempt to better oneself?

There may not be any, but I won't live that way. I don't want to play into it and just give up. Life is like...just trying to get by...and getting less fucked. But at the same time, I don't want to screw anyone over. I have a heavy conscious, when I do something wrong I feel bad about it.

I agree with you. I think that everything exists by design to keep us down in some way shape or form.

People *need* to keep other people down.

It makes people feel better about themselves...

...in everything in life. Look at relationships. There is always one person who's dominant. People play these games where they don't want the other person to feel too secure because they're afraid they might leave.

I think that that is one of the main contributing factors in relationships proving themselves to be futile.

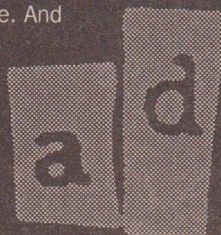
I think so too. That's a lot to give up—it's almost divine.

But that's all ego and it's weird that we as humans can't get past it.

That's the human condition and I think that you have to recognize that. Most people will never see it but when you do, how do you get by it?

If you do recognize it and you put it out on the table, you're setting yourself up. You're giving too much of yourself away by showing all of your cards and I think that people will end up using it against you.

I'm not saying that you have to be overtly trusting, I'm not, but at the same time I want to give people a chance. I'm the type of person that when I make up my mind, that's it and you're not going to get another chance. I think a lot of people are like that. Then there are others who give people too many chances and end up getting walked all over—it's mainly because they're insecure. You need to be able to give people some leeway but there's definitely a limit. There's only so much you can let people get away with. From the minute you're born you're getting fucked over, people just seem to get used to it. It's sad but it's true. And again, it's the theme of our band and as sad and depressing as it may seem, a whole lot of people can relate to it. ©



オナウ

The Plan brings you excellent weird art with a cool glance that says "Hey sexy, I pass on the right." Picture the cast of Scooby Do hopped up on speed playing a high school prom on Mars. Throw in a sense of humor that's black as night and you're staring down the barrel of The Dismemberment Plan. Having put out one of the best albums last year, on Jawbox's label DeSoto

THE DISMEMBERMENT PLAN

"DeSoto is the
label that pays me..."





Hey what publication is this for any-
ways? PUNK PLANET. Punk Planet! Punk Planet
gave us a horrible review!

クツキヒウヒソウエヒウハオ

WHAT WAS THE RUNNER-UP NAME FOR THE BAND?

Eric: "Number One Cool Guy." "Number One Cool Guy" and "The Harlem Hell Fighters," which I still think our band name should be. I think that's a brilliant band name.

Joe: We got stuck with a horrible name. We can't change it now because people know who we are, but we've been paying the price for a long time. We've been put on metal bills before because of our name. Who was it with? Mutant Speed or something? Mutant Speed and Living Abortion in Florida.

Eric: The true runner up I think is The Harlem Hell Fighters. The last name we played under before we were the Dismemberment Plan was Number One Cool Guy, which I think is from King Rat, which is a war book about Korea.

THE WRITE UP I READ ABOUT YOU GUYS SAID SOMETHING ABOUT LISTENING TO TOO MANY LL COOL J RECORDS, AND SOMETHING ELSE.

Jason: Oh, about playing a lot of Atari and listening to LL Cool J records.

Eric: We listen to a lot of random shit. A lot of hip hop and dance music. And punk rock and what not. I guess growing up we listened to a lot of strange shit. We're all kind of computer people in one way or another. Joe works at a computer store, Travis is a graphic artist, Jason is a computer fanatic. I grew up playing a lot of Commodore 64 games. A lot of Jumpman, a lot of Frogger, a lot of Tron. Missile Command. So I guess we're part of the 80's computer generation, rolled in there is a lot of other weird shit.

NAME A COUPLE OF SONGS YOU WOULD LIKE TO DO COVERS OF.

Eric: Oh we love doing covers. Have you heard our cover of *Close to Me* by the Cure? We did it for an AIDs benefit album which was a bunch of D.C. bands doing Cure covers. We *did* *Close to Me* with a string quartet and a D.J. and a conga player. It's kind of slow and groovy. The bass is tuned down to a B so it's kind of warbly. It's a neat cover. It's my favorite thing we've ever recorded. We're thinking of doing a cover of *September* by Earth Wind and Fire now. We once did a John Spencer kind of cover of *Boy in the Bubble* by Paul Simon. We think covers are great. It's just a matter of taking a song and making it yours. We used to do *Damn, I Wish I Was Your Lover* by Sophie B. Hawkins. We're working on *Born on the Bayou* by Creedence Clearwater Revival. That's kind of neat. It's a lot of fun.

WHAT ARE A COUPLE OF THE BEST LIVE SHOWS YOU'VE EVER SEEN?

Eric: In '91 I saw a show at a church in D.C., it was Fugazi, NoMeansNo and the Ex. It was the most brilliant show ever. The Ex is this Dutch Avante Garde crazy band. NoMeansNo, at the end of their set, the guy unscrewed his pickups and put a finger on the scroll on his effects rack and it ran through 99 effects in loop while holding his pickup far away from his guitar, and it made the most insane sound I'd ever heard. That and I saw The Neville Brothers with The Dave Matthews Band. That was a really great line-up also. Joe?

Punk Planet Go To Hell

Joe: Judas Priest and Megadeth man. He drove out onstage in a motorcycle and everything.

Eric: It's hard to get really blown away these days. I saw Trans Am recently and they blew me away. It was Trans Am and Soul Coughing. That was a really great show.

Travis: Nation of Ulysses.

IF YOU COULD BOOK A THREE BAND SHOW WITH ANY THREE BANDS, ALIVE OR DEAD, TOGETHER OR BROKEN UP, WHO WOULD IT BE AND IN WHAT ORDER?

Eric: Bob Marley, Jimi Hendrix, and Janis Joplin, with Jimi headlining, Janis opening and Bob working the middle. All three bands I'll never get to see.

Joe: I'm on the dream tour right now. I'd have to say Jawbox, Shudder to Think and, everybody hates them but me, The Smashing Pumpkins. I like them.

NAME AN ALBUM YOU'RE ASHAMED TO SAY YOU PAID MONEY FOR.

Joe: Everclear. I went to high school with the drummer, and I bought it because we were good friends. I hope he doesn't read this.

GOOD ENOUGH FRIENDS THAT HE COULDN'T SEND YOU A FREEBIE.

Eric: Exactly! Yeah, he told me to buy it and I did. I think he's a great drummer, I'm just not really into the music. Enough said.

Joe: I bought an ALL record once because I liked The Descendents back in the day, like way back. It was really...not good.

Jason: (guitar) I don't know if I was ever ashamed of buying a CD. I've regretted buying CD's before. I regretted buying Baloon Mindstate by De La Soul because it just wasn't all that good. Paris' second record, not The Devil Made Me Do It, the one after that. The Devil Made Me Do It is a great record.

Eric: A lot of the bands we were really into in like '93, like the sophomore albums of the hip hop posse, like Black Sheep's

second album wasn't that good, Del The Funky Homosapien's second album wasn't that good.

Travis: Actually I've found that if you act with enough arrogant confidence about your purchases your friends will end up liking them. The purchases I especially don't like I act like I do. I'm embarrassed about the ones I do like. But I do have this CD single, there's this old song by Luther Vandross and Janet Jackson...

Eric: Oh No!!!

Travis: I used to torment my friends with it. I thought it was the greatest song, but it was terrible. I still have it at home. If anybody found that I'd probably be embarrassed. Hey what publication is this for anyways?

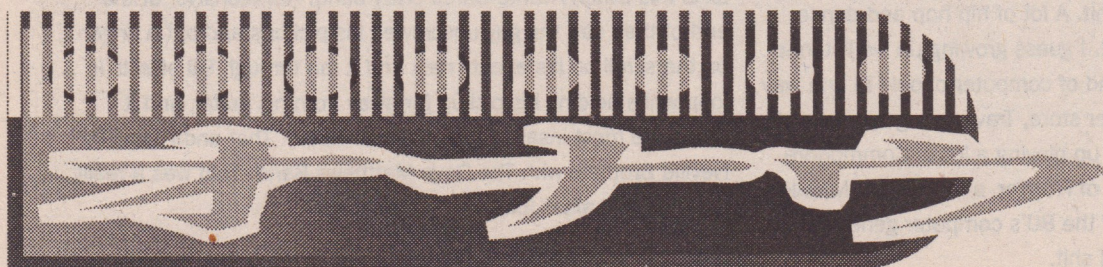
PUNK PLANET.

Travis: Punk Planet! Punk Planet gave us a horrible review!

Becky (crazy person somehow connected to the band): Punk Planet go to hell!!!

WASHINGTON HAS ALWAYS BEEN ONE OF THE SCENES THAT PEOPLE KIND OF KEEP UP WITH. LIKE IT'S KIND OF A PULSE FOR WHAT'S GOING ON. IT'S BEEN A FEW YEARS SINCE ANYTHING WAS REALLY GOING ON...

Eric: Yeah, there was that big lull. A lot of bands broke up or changed or whatever. But it's really fertile now. It's totally diverse. Like for a while it was very punk, but now there's like Trans Am which is like computer noise, and there's Chisel who is mod, and there's the Make-up doing soul, the Delta 72's doing the bayou blues thing. There's Smart Went Crazy, insane song writing, very melodic, they have a cello player. Branch Manager is like rock fusion. There's a ton of new bands coming out of D.C. right now. I'm very happy, all of a sudden all of these bands are taking off. The Warners are doing a garagey thing, Blue Tip is kind of a traditional punk thing, Regulator Watts are doing the Hoover, more emo thing. A lot of very different bands. I'm very proud to be from D.C. right now. For a while it was scary because no one knew if anything was going on. ☺



Life's a pitch



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PAT WEST FOR CHANGE

Pat West speaks his mind like few others in a scene that only wishes it had guts. West is the critic in a scene that can't take criticism.

Pat West is the brains and the brawn behind the no-holds-barred Change Zine out of Westport, Connecticut. He's the Master and the Blaster wrapped up in one—if anyone saw Mad Max Beyond Thunerdome—and he's about as tall. Pat's got 9 issues out and is always one of the more interesting reads in the hardcore zine community due to his confrontational approach and his ever present sense of humor. Pat's love of hardcore/punk, basketball and the Simpsons always provide a good variety of stuff to read.

And he fucking hates Punk Planet. Gives us the worst reviews I've ever read. That's why, like the Borg, we have assimilated him. You'll note he's all over this issue. He didn't put up a fight cuz he knows **RESISTANCE IS FUTILE.**

Interview by Josh Hooten

**I LIKE TO FUCK, AND I LIKE TO KILL DOGS. AH YEAH.
TO KILL DOGS. AH YEAH.**

I'M MACKIN' NOW.

I'M MACKIN' NOW.

PP: Dave Hake says you're the straightest person he's ever met.

W: Straightest?

PP: Heterosexual.

W: I thought Dave was gay.

PP: He is. His column in the last Change Zine started with "It's all about being gay isn't it?" What did you think he meant, happy and stuff?

W: I don't know what the fuck he's writing about. He gave me that column, I don't know what it means to this day. The other ones I was able to figure out with many dictionaries.

PP: We were talking about you one day and he was talking about how very heterosexual you were.

W: I guess that's true. I guess it's all tied into the whole macho, sports thing I guess. I'm...when...

PP: You're not too comfortable talking about this are you?

W: Well when you grow up in an Irish-Catholic family, this doesn't have anything to do with gay or straight, when you grow up in an Irish-Catholic family you don't touch each other. Families touch, they hug and stuff. We don't. I don't touch my brother. You punch him, that's it. I don't touch my sisters, I don't touch my dad, a handshake is odd alright? My mom, when she hugs me I feel like I'm freaking out. That stuff never happens. Like some people are always touching you like "hey how ya doing?" I'm like get off of me. I have a very antagonistic view on life. It has a lot to do with being punk and hardcore and who I am. I don't know how much it has to do with being gay or straight. I was always a little horny little kid, always into girls or whatever, and I finally found a girlfriend who is just dead on. And by God she likes to have sex too! And well Jesus Christ we do it a lot. I've had the same girlfriend for five years. I don't know if being heterosexual or being really straight is just about sex, but I'm really into that kind of sex. Like no one ever talks about sex in hardcore and stuff, but I'm really down with it. Completely. I'm into a lot of sex. There is no such thing as bad sex.

PP: Are you sure about that?

W: Yes. Like the lowest is pretty good you know?

PP: I remember something you wrote a few issues back about how fun sex was and how it was cool, and how you were sorry if some emo kid had sex with some girl once and thought she didn't like it...

W: I read an interview with Rob from Endpoint once and he was like "Oh I had sex once and I just felt like I was using her even though we both consented and we both did it. I felt so terrible." Like what the fuck? It's inconceivable to me. Like the whole "Don't drink, Don't smoke, Don't fuck," you can leave off the last part of that straight edge

crede for me. I know a lot of it came out of high school, people being used, and some guy hitting on some girl and her thinking she had to do it, I know, I went to college and saw the whole frat scenario which is really bad. I don't mean that, I just think if a lot of these kids were having more sex it would be cool. Like I think drugs are bad, I'm not down with drinking or smoking, but fucking is just awesome. And people should just do it a hell of a lot more. A lot more.

PP: Maybe this is a backlash from all that not touching growing up.

W: Oh man, any psychiatrist or psychologist could take me apart in two seconds. It doesn't take a genius to figure it out. People should screw and talk about sex much more. I'd rather read a whole article with Ray Cappo about sex than about finding spiritual enlightenment and eating tahini, you know?

PP: You're a little bit older than most of the kids in the scene, do you expect as much from youngsters as you do from older people, like you and me?

W: I wish people did more stuff. I think a lot of the younger kids don't do jack shit. No one I know under like 18 does anything and it really sucks because that's when you really have the power to mobilize. People say, oh when I'm older, when I'm 25 I'll do all this shit, but it's a crock of shit because by then 99% of the people you know aren't going to have anything to do with the music you're interested in anymore, and 75% won't even be around the scene in any capacity. I don't really see the age difference...I don't hang out, I don't have peers really. I e-mail people, but I don't hang out with hardcore people, I never did. I've always been alone. When I grew up I went to prep school in Virginia so I never knew anyone when I'd come home. I'd always go to shows by myself. I do this zine pretty much by myself. Other people review records and do columns but they're not with me, you know? I kind of view myself as peerless. It's cool when I do get to meet people, but they do all seem to be older. Very few younger kids seem to be doing too much stuff, and I guess that's the way it's always been.

PP: Being older, and peerless, why do you stay involved? What's the incentive?

W: My theory on this is I would see so many kids when I was going to shows when I was younger, so many people were really into it. Like 17 is a peak age for a lot of people. They go to a lot of shows, they know a lot of people. My peak as far as going to shows was probably last year. For a lot of kids it's 17 and 18. I keep getting more and more interested. I didn't get burned out. For whatever reason kids get burned out and move on. For me it's always been more of a loner thing. I just keep going. Unfortunately in a way I only do it for the bands I interview and the few people that I seem to get along with. Luckily there are enough people out there who seem to have similar feelings and buy the fanzine. I'm 24, which is old in punk or hardcore, but I don't give a fuck. I don't

I HAD SOMEBODY ARGUE WITH ME WHAT THE USE OF HAVING EARTH CRISIS GETTING THE SHIT KICKED OUT OF THEM WOULD BE...

write and I don't give a shit about any of the kids. I give a shit about some band that's going to kick my ass, whether they're 30 year olds or whether they're 15 year olds. Though I give 15 year olds much more leeway as to whether they're going to be good or not.

PP: So who are some of these bands that keep you involved?

W: Unfortunately all the bands I know aren't involved in the scene at all. They just play their music and that's all they really give a shit about. Like Today is the Day, who I really like, they don't even know what hardcore or punk is. They don't know any of those bands, they don't know what Victory Records is, they don't know what any of that is, it just means nothing to them. That kind of blows me away. Another band, C.R. from New York City, they're kind of involved in the scene, they put on shows, they're awesome. They kind of cross the line between traditional hardcore and real psycho thrash, they're awesome. I only interview bands that I like. I should probably interview bands that I hate and see what happens. But I saw Earth.Crisis and I thought I'd be mad enough to interview them, but it was totally a joke. It's just a bad metal band with a bunch of little kids who are all under 5'5. It wouldn't even be funny, I could kick the shit out of all of them at once.

PP: It could have been a photo essay of you fighting Earth Crisis.

W: Well I was actually in New Jersey and there was this huge fight about to break out. It was actually Justine Demetrik's boyfriend, his name is Dan or whatever, him and some guys were about to kick the shit out of them, but the Earth Crisis guys all wimped out. They would have got destroyed. I was just sitting there waiting to watch a fight. I'm so bad. Just wanting to watch a fight. And I was looking for an excuse to get in on it. So terrible. But whatever, I'm not going to deny it.

PP: What's the point of fighting Earth Crisis?

W: Well for them...you know that whole incident where some kid ran across the stage in a fake fur coat during an Earth Crisis show? I'm not directly involved in this, I don't know who the main players are, so this is a rumor of a rumor, so people will probably think I'm spreading bullshit, but whatever. I guess some guy decided to have some fun, or make fun of Earth Crisis and he got beat up. I think that guy does Down But Not Out fanzine, a really good fanzine. The people he knew were at some show and they were mad at Earth Crisis or whatever, and some shit happened, somebody got punched in the side of the head or something. So it was like crew versus crew stuff. And the New Jersey crew were just being thugs. I thought it was kind of funny. I had somebody argue with me what the use of having Earth Crisis getting the shit kicked out of them would be. I'm a firm believer in the fact that if you get the shit kicked out of you you become much more humble. People say violence begets violence, but I don't think so. Anyone I've ever beaten up or gotten in a fight with I've never gotten in a fight with again. If you get your ass kicked you're not going to be an asshole to that person ever again. You're going to keep your mouth shut.

PP: But don't people have a right to speak their mind and not get beat up for it?

W: Of course. That's kind of where it goes back and forth, like if you think about it too much it's like, well you can't be a fascist back to them, even though they're total fascists. I just think what they've done for punk and hardcore is complete bullshit. I'm not even talking about the animal liberation and vegan thing. That stuff means nothing to me. Absolutely nothing. I just think punk and hardcore have become so separated from each other and people like them totally push punk people to an end and also people who float in the Art Monk/Dischord realm to an end so they have nothing to do with hardcore anymore. And it's because of the way that they act and the things that they do and the things that they say. And it's like yeah, you can talk about it and try to work it out, but just every once in a while just kick the shit out of them. We think you're a bunch of shit. I don't even like to think about it too much because I know that what I'm saying is hypocritical. Like if they speak homophobic lines, which they have, no matter how much they try to deny it, and they're using force against homosexuals which is wrong, but you can't use force back on them, what does that accomplish? See, I'm not trying to accomplish anything except try to show other people in the world that not everyone in hardcore likes Earth Crisis. That's the stigma, and I don't want to have that stigma put on me anymore. I like hardcore bands and I hate Earth Crisis, that's all there is too it.

PP: You have a really strong opinion, and a lot of people will sort of pull back on what they say to keep getting free records or to keep getting ads or whatever. You don't seem to care too much. Have you ever gotten any backlash?

West: I don't know, nobody ever comes out and tells you they're not going to send you records, but I know some people don't like it. Like sometimes I'll all of a sudden stop getting records from someone. Certain places will never give me records and won't give me ads. I'm not sure why. My zine doesn't come out as often as I'd like, but I always tell people I'm going to be around forever. They never seem to believe me, because so many zines flake, so I don't get stuff from a lot of people, which is fine with me. The less records I get the happier I am. I still hold back a lot. You still have to hold back. If I said everything it would turn into a shit rag. Believe me, I hold back.

PP: What do you listen to when you're not listening to all this really heavy, brutal stuff? What do you listen to when you want to relax?

W: I don't. It's weird but I can fall asleep and find really soothing any Cro-Mags or Bad Brains. Age of Quarrel or I Against I. That stuff's really peaceful to me. The Conan soundtrack.

PP: The what?

W: THE CONAN SOUNDTRACK. That makes me want to kill people. It's the best CD you can buy. I'll listen to Rancid, poppy stuff. I'll put on Doc Hopper. Whatever. But no, I don't put on Simon and Garfunkel. I don't say, oh when I was a kid I used to like the Smiths and I'll put that on, no. I don't have any of that stuff. I don't listen to anything other than punk or hardcore, or really aggressive stuff. The Usual Suspects soundtrack is good. It's like you're on drugs or something.

...I'M A FIRM BELIEVER IN THE FACT THAT IF YOU GET THE SHIT KICKED OUT OF YOU YOU BECOME MUCH MORE HUMBLE.

PP: What's wrong with emo?

W: Nothing. I'm down with that shit. But you know, when the whole emo thing came up, I just didn't get it. Like I thought Dag Nasty was supposed to be emo and they rocked the shit out of everyone. I'm cool with it. I guess when you say emo you're talking about skinny white boys playing basement shows and falling on the floor, and screaming and stuff. If emo means trying to be like Rorschach, I'm cool with that. I like a lot of the music. I can't even name an emo band. Is like Cable an emo band?

PP: I have no idea.

W: I don't know either. Actually they're not an emo band, I don't know. Maybe like mature emo bands, like Mineral and Giant's Chair and Boy's Life, I like that music a lot. It's cool.

PP: What about Heartattack?

W: Heartattack is...

PP: Did you threaten to beat up Kent?

W: (laughs) No I didn't threaten to beat up Kent McClard. The guy I do the zine with, Johnny T, I was fucking with him one day when all these rumors flew up about us and Commodity, and I told him I threatened to beat up Kent if he didn't do an interview with me or whatever, because that's the scene that Johnny kind of pays attention to. He was all worried. He's into a lot of that music. So I said it just to scare him, but I think he told everyone I threatened to beat up Kent McClard. But as a zine, Heartattack, first and foremost, anytime I see it I buy it and I like to read it. I'm a fan of fanzines, and it's one of the better fanzines. It's well put together and it has cohesive thoughts. Some of the people in it, Felix Von Havoc I think is awesome, I like some of the things he writes. That's it. Unfortunately the negatives I have for it are it's this, but it could be this. There's things he purposely doesn't do, he doesn't interview a lot of bands, I don't know why, he doesn't interview any fanzines, I don't know why, he has tons and tons of reviews. If you're not in that scene, all those band names mean nothing because they can't stay together for longer than six months.

PP: Or when they review a record and say "This sounds a little like Christopher Robin, but with a little more Still Life" but I don't know what any of those references sound like. I don't know who those people are! They refer to people nobody knows.

W: I completely agree. Sometimes those records are difficult for me to find, and I don't mailorder everything. Right now there are very few zines where I actually read fanzine and record reviews, and I base what I buy on those reviews and right now Heartattack is not one of those zines. Maybe because I don't know who the reviewers are and what their tastes are, but at the same time I think they've got good taste there. Their into the Voorhees and some hard crazy shit that I'm into. I don't know, it's a really good zine and I aspire to have the size that it has, maybe the organization. It must take a lot of

organization to do that. I think they could do a lot better job with their distribution, I can never find it out here. Could be a little thicker, whatever.

PP: What about Punk Planet?

W: Punk Planet...it's another zine that I always buy, but it's never as good as I think it should be. It's not the layout, I don't know. Like a month later I'll read it again and I'll be like "Oh my God, there's a good article in here." Most of it is just alright. I guess it's not aggressive enough for me. Actually that's probably it, now that I think about it. It's not mean enough, it's not aggressive enough. I wish the reviewers were a little more to the point. And some of the columnists are just goofy. I wish it had more of an edge. I wish it would pick more of a fight with MRR, just for the hell of it. I don't actively hate it. I read it.

PP: What makes a good zine? What, content wise, makes something worth while?

W: Well even before the content, a lot of it is the maker, the creator. I'm much more into zines done by one person or maybe by two people. That's a stigma against big zines, there's so many people working on it you can slam it more, but if it's one guy doing it, it's like well this guy is trying hard, he's doing a lot. Like Pat West doing Change Zine putting out 116 pages, he's busting his ass he's great, but if there were thirty of us it would be just O.K. I mean I adhere to that stigma. I like things done by one or two people that curse a lot. People that are kind of funny. Past zines I like were No Exit out of Canada, he had good interviews with good bands I like. He'd interview Rollins and be like "So why do you think you're such a toughguy?" or "Why do you think lifting weights is going to change the world?" or "When you talk about napalming a city, do you even know what napalm smells like?" No Answers was pretty good to. The interviews were a little long. That was Kent's old zine. I'm into zines with good band interviews and articles I can connect with, and some good photos. You'd be surprised how many people just can't do that, and make it longer than 24 pages or whatever.

PP: What makes for a good interview with a band?

W: Them. If they can talk well. If they know I'm doing an interview and they have ideas and they can talk. Some bands I'm just mesmerized by. They just stand there. Some bands only do like "funny" interviews and they're just goofy all the time, it's like shut the fuck up, you know? I think I've been pretty lucky. To be honest I think my interviews are really good. I manage to get people to say what's on their minds. It's good to get some one when they're by themselves, so you know there's something on their mind. Whenever someone's sitting alone or depressed it's always good to interview them. I always try to get people to talk shit when I interview them. I like to see what people have to say about

THIS IS SOMETHING I BELIEVE IN BECAUSE I LIKE THIS MUSIC A LOT, AND I THINK THAT EVERY OTHER FORM OF MUSIC IS A PIECE OF SHIT AND IT'S ALL LIES. IT'S ALL FUCKING LIES. 90% OF THE PEOPLE OUT THERE ALL LISTEN TO LIES.

everyone else. But it's just like in big media or whatever, when you start talking about someone and how you dislike them and stuff, you're putting stuff in the open that not everyone is appreciative of, especially the person being talked about because you know that person is going to talk about you. And a lot of it is unnecessary. But it's fun to read.

PP: What's the best show you've ever seen?

W: Probably the Bad Brains in 88' or 89. We were in high school. It was at the Living Room in Providence. It was out of control. That was a really good show. Actually I have very few memories of good shows. Like I tell my girlfriend I'm going to some show, and she'll come with me and it will start three hours late and the band will fuck up and everyone will just stand there. And she'll be like "Why the fuck do you go to those things?" And I'll be like "I really don't know. Jesus Christ I don't know." When I was young I was excited to go, I was having fun, but for kids today it's like hanging out at the mall. Whatever.

PP: It's stuff like that that makes me wonder why I still do this. It's no real question that I do, and will continue to, but stuff like that makes it difficult for me to come up with a reason. Until I see a really great band, then it all makes sense again.

W: Again, if I went to every single show when I grew up in D.C. I would have seen so many awesome bands and now it would just be pathetic. Absolutely pathetic, and maybe I wouldn't go to shows anymore. But also I'm not a quitter. You try to stick with it, but it's true though. You don't know why you do it, you go to a show and it's just boring. The band isn't confrontational, or if they are they're stupid yelling at you like "You fucking suck, where is everyone?" And it's like, why are you yelling at me? I'm actually here. And then at the same time you don't want to see a band act crazy and say stupid things if it's unnatural. But you can't deny that bands are performers and in a way, entertainers. I know everyone's got an agenda, some bands are like "Well we're not a funny band" or whatever or we're not trying to change the world, we're just playing our songs. Well if you're just playing your songs and you're happy that 50 people are just standing there, why don't you just play in your basement? Why get out and play shows? Why flood the scene with more bands so there's never a bill with like 7 awesome bands? I don't understand how a band can ever be satisfied with people just standing there. Even if you're anti-violence or anti-movement. I never see one band saying "O.K., moshing is done, let's have everybody do a disco." Or do Red Rover across the dance floor. If that was actually happening at shows it'd be great. It'd be hilarious. But they don't do anything like that. And I personally blame all the bands for it. They're all a bunch of fucking wimps. A bunch of wimps. How can you do that? How can you drive 6 hours to a show "We played some basement to 50 people and some kid made us pasta. That's what we want to do. We want to see the country." Why are you in my scene? You have nothing to do with me. I want bands to get out there and kill themselves, and get as many people to the shows as possible, and to have fun, and while also saying something that's thought provoking or challenging.

PP: Like Rage Against the Machine?

W: Rage Against the Machine kicks the shit out of 99% of the bands in our scene, musically and what they do onstage.

PP: Sometimes I wonder what it would be like if I was to just drop out for like 6 months, or a year, and not do anything, and not be in touch at all with the scene. Like if I dropped out of it for that long, when I came back I wonder if I looked at it would I think I'd wasted all that time because it wasn't really important. Like it seems important when you're immersed in it, but I wonder if I stepped away if I would realize there were better ways to spend my energy.

W: I'm sure there are more important things to do, but I still think punk and hardcore are more important than what A LOT of people go out and do. I don't socialize, I don't go to bars, I don't hang out with people. I play basketball, I work a lot, and I do my zine. I bust my ass on punk and hardcore. People ask me what I do and I tell them. I ask them what they do and they're like "oh my god, last night I was at my friends house and I don't even remember what happened." Or they're like "Oh we'll go to the beach and we'll just sit there." Like 90% of those people later on in their lives are going to be like, I should of or could of done this or whatever. I don't have any should of or could of's in my life. Other than I should have tried to get laid when I was 14 instead of much later. I don't worry about it much now, but at the time I did, trust me. I don't want to think about what I should have or could have done. This is something I believe in because I like this music a lot, and I think that every other form of music is a piece of shit and it's all lies. It's all fucking lies. 90% of the people out there all listen to lies. They don't know what the fuck is going on. I like to have that edge on people.

PP: Talk about the people who bother you about beating up Josh's dog.

W: Well people don't really bother me, but people ask me, I'd say about a dozen people, and that's a lot because I only talk to major scenesters, I don't talk to the common folk. I only talk to people who do zines and records. They call to get an ad or they haven't gotten my zine or something and they're like "So hey, what's the story with that Commodity thing?" and they've heard a story that I kicked in a dog's head, or that I killed a dog or that I was the aggressor in some things, and they don't really want to say "what the fuck were you thinking?" they want to find out, but they still know I was in the wrong. And I can't change their minds, I tell them what really happened and fuck it. And they're like "Well you know fucks are no good and you should just drop it." Meaning me make the peace after almost killing the guy's dog. I'm not about to do that so...and like it comes around. Like anybody that's down with Commodity isn't down with Change. Like Art Monk won't give me any ads. They're like "We like Commodity" and I'm all "Well I killed his dog." and they're all "Well see ya."

PP: Wait, I thought you said you almost killed his dog?

W: That's what they think, but I didn't kill his dog.

PP: So the dog died, but it wasn't your fault?

W: The dog's not dead is it? The last I heard it was just retarded or something. Like brain damaged. The last thing I need is this to read "I like to fuck, and I like to kill dogs." Ah yeah. I'm mackin' now. ©



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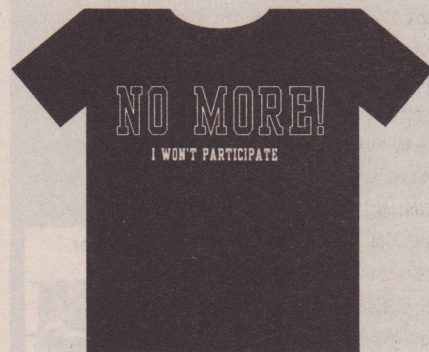
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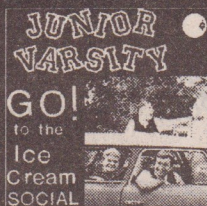
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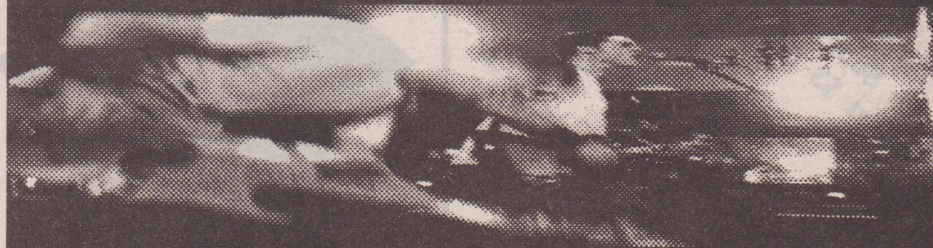


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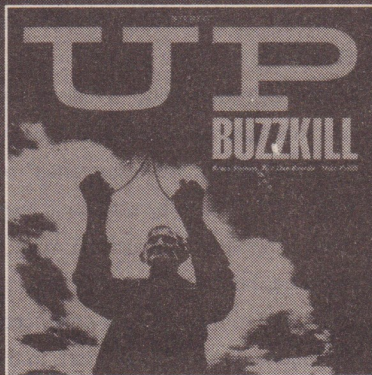
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START

THE EMPIRE OF SIGNS

It is a fact of modern times that our lives are intimately and inextricably bound up in the TV experience. Ninety-eight percent of all American households—more than have indoor plumbing—have at least one television which, on the average, is on seven hours a day. Dwindling funds for public schools and libraries, counterpointed by the skyrocketing sales of VCRs and electronic games, have given rise to a culture of “aliteracy,” defined by Roger Cohen as “the rejection of books by children and young adults who know how to read but choose not to.” The drear truth that two thirds of Americans get “most of their information” from television is hardly a revelation.

The effects of television are most deleterious in the realms of journalism and politics; in both spheres, TV has reduced news to photo ops and sound bites, asserting the dominance of image over language, emotion over intellect.

These developments are bodied forth in Ronald Reagan, a TV invention who for eight years held the news media, and thus the American public, spellbound. During the Reagan years, America was transformed into a TV democracy whose prime directive is social control through the fabrication and manipulation of images. “We [the Reagan campaign staff] tried to create the most entertaining, visually attractive scene to fill that box, so that the cameras from the networks would have to use it,” explained former Reagan advisor Michael Deaver. “It would be so good that they’d say, ‘Boy, this is going to make our show tonight.’ [W]e became Hollywood producers.” And we, the American public, as we saw our jobs taken away from us, our money given to the rich,

and our rights taken away, became—unwittingly—inhabitants of Regan’s World, a land and a time that existed only in the television.

In his landmark 1975 essay, “The Precession of Simulacra,” philosopher Jean Baudrillard put forth the notion that we inhabit a “hyperreality,” a hall of media mirrors in which reality has been lost in an infinity of reflections. We “experience” events, first and foremost, as electronic reproductions of rumored phenomena many times removed, he maintains; originals, invariably compared to their digitally-enhanced representations, inevitably fall short. In the “desert of the real,” asserts Baudrillard, mirages outnumber oases and are more alluring to the thirsty eye.

Moreover, he argues, signs that once pointed toward distant realities now refer only to themselves. Disneyland’s Main Street, U.S.A., which depicts the sort of idyllic, turn-of-the-century burg that exists only in Norman Rockwell paintings and MGM backlots, is a textbook example of self-referential simulation, a painstaking replica of something that never was. “These would be the successive phases of the image,” writes Baudrillard, betraying an almost necrophiliac relish as he contemplates the decomposition of culturally-defined reality. “[The image] is the reflection of a basic reality; it masks and perverts a basic reality; it masks the absence of a basic reality; it bears no relation to any reality whatever: it is its own pure simulacrum.”

Reality isn’t what it used to be. In America, factory capitalism has been superseded by an information economy characterized by the reduction of labor to the manipulation, on computers, of symbols that stand in for the manufacturing process. The engines of industrial production have slowed,

yielding to a phantasmagoric capitalism that produces intangible commodities—Hollywood blockbusters, television sit-coms, catch-phrases, jingles, buzzwords, images, one-minute megatrends, financial transactions flickering through fiberoptic bundles. Our wars are Nintendo wars, fought with camera-equipped smart bombs that marry cinema and weaponry in a television that kills.

Meanwhile, the question remains: How to box with shadows? In other words, what shape does an engaged politics assume in an empire of signs?

The answer lies, perhaps, in the “semiological guerrilla warfare” imagined by Umberto Eco. “[T]he receiver of the message seems to have a residual freedom: the freedom to read it in a different way...I am proposing an action to urge the audience to control the message and its multiple possibilities of interpretation,” he writes. “[O]ne medium can be employed to communicate a series of opinions on another medium...The universe of Technological Communication would then be patrolled by groups of communications guerrillas, who would restore a critical dimension to passive reception.”

Eco assumes, a priori, the radical politics of visual literacy, an idea eloquently argued by Stuart Ewen, a critic of consumer culture. “We live at a time when the image has become the predominant mode of public address, eclipsing all other forms in the structuring of meaning,” asserts Ewen. “Yet little in our education prepares us to make sense of the rhetoric, historical development or social implications of the images within our lives.” In a society of heat, light and electronic poltergeists—an eerie otherworld of “illimitable vastness, brilliant light, and the gloss and smoothness of material things”—

CONTINUED

Hacking Slashing and Sniping in the Empire of Signs

Head: Culture Jamming
Supplied: Hacking, Slashing and Sniping in
the Empire of Signs
By: Mark Dery

Part One: The Empire of Signs

It is a fact of modern times that our lives are increasingly and inextricably bound up in the TV experience. In nearly every house in all American households—more than have indoor plumbing—have at least one television which, on the average, is on seven hours a day. Dwindling funds for public schools and libraries, accompanied by the skyrocketing rates of VCR and electronic games, have given rise to a culture of "sit-back," defined by Robert Cohen as "the selection of books by children and young adults who know how to read but choose not to. The great truth that few things of American life, more so than television, from television is hardly a revelation. The effects of television are most deleterious in the realms of journalism and politics; in both spheres, TV has reduced news to photo ops and sound bites, asserting the dominance of image over language, emotion over intellect.

These developments are bodied forth in Ronald Reagan, a TV invention who for eight years held the news media, and thus the American public, spellbound. During the Reagan years, America was transformed into a TV democracy whose prime directive is social control through the fabrication and manipulation of images. "We [the Reagan campaign staff] tried to create the most entertaining, rivalling alternative scene to fill part of the hole that the cameras from the network would have to use it," explained former Reagan advisor Michael Deaver. "It would be so good that they'd say, 'But this is going to make our show look like a piece of shit.'"

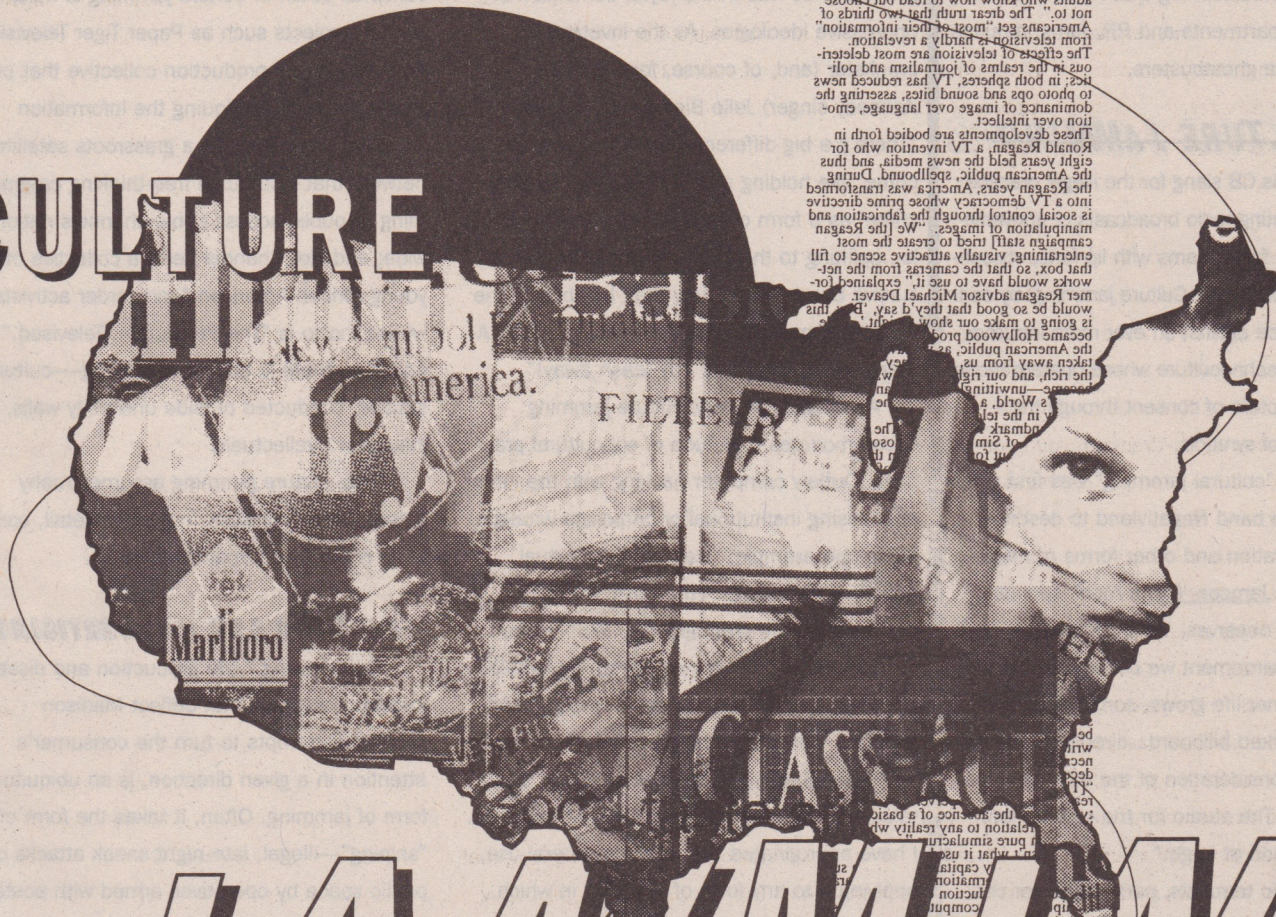
Reagan, the rich, and our right-wing culture—these are the three main ingredients of the American public. The rich, and our right-wing culture—these are the three main ingredients of the American public. The rich, and our right-wing culture—these are the three main ingredients of the American public.

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CULTURE



JAMMING

THE ARTICLE STARTS ON THE OTHER PAGE

BY MARK DERY

CONTINUED

PULL QUOTE

the desperate project of reconstructing meaning, or at least reclaiming that notion from marketing departments and P.R. firms, requires visually-literate ghostbusters.

CULTURE JAMMING

Jamming" is CB slang for the illegal practice of interrupting radio broadcasts or conversations between fellow hams with lip farts, obscenities, and other noises. Culture jamming, by contrast, is directed against an ever more intrusive, instrumental technoculture whose operant mode is the manufacture of consent through the manipulation of symbols.

The term "cultural jamming" was first used by the collage band Negativland to describe billboard alteration and other forms of media sabotage. On *Jamcon '84*, a mock-serious bandmember observes, "As awareness of how the media environment we occupy affects and directs our inner life grows, some resist...The skillfully reworked billboard...directs the public viewer to a consideration of the original corporate strategy. The studio for the cultural jammer is the world at large."

Part artistic terrorists, part vernacular critics, culture jammers, like Eco's "communications guerrillas," introduce noise into the signal as it passes from transmitter to receiver, encouraging idiosyncratic, unintended interpretations. Intruding on the intruders, they invest ads, newscasts, and other media artifacts with subversive meanings; simultaneously, they decrypt them, rendering their seductions impotent. Jammers offer irrefutable evidence that the right has no copyright on war waged with incantations and simulations. And, like Ewen's cultural cryptographers, they refuse the role of passive shoppers, renewing the notion of a public discourse.

Finally, and just as importantly, culture

jammers are Groucho Marxists, ever mindful of the fun to be had in the joyful demolition of oppressive ideologies. As the inveterate prankster (and, of course, former Dead Kennedy singer) Jello Biafra once observed, "There's a big difference between 'simple crime' like holding up a 7-11, and 'creative crime' as a form of expression...Creative crime is...uplifting to the soul...What better way to survive our anthill society than by abusing the very mass media that sedates the public?...A prank a day keeps the dog leash away!"

An elastic category, culture jamming accommodates multitude of subcultural practices. Outlaw computer hacking with the intent of exposing institutional or corporate wrongdoing is one example; "slashing," or textual poaching, is another. (The term "slashing" derives from the pornographic "K/S"—short for "Kirk/Spock"—stories written by female *Star Trek* fans and published in underground fanzines. Spun from the perceived homoerotic subtext in *Star Trek* narratives, K/S, or "slash," tales are often animated by feminist impulses. I have appropriated the term for general use, applying it to any form of jamming in which tales told for mass consumption are perversely reworked.) Transmission jamming; pirate TV and radio broadcasting; and camcorder countersurveillance (in which low cost consumer technologies are used by DIY muckrakers to document police brutality or governmental corruption) are potential modus operandi for the culture jammer. So, too, is media activism such as the cheery immolation of a mound of television sets in front of CBS's Manhattan offices—part of a protest against media bias staged by FAIR (Fairness and Accuracy In Reporting) during the Gulf War—and "media-wrenching" such as ACT UP's disruption of *The MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour* in protest of infre-

quent AIDS coverage. A somewhat more conventional strain of culture jamming is mediawatch projects such as Paper Tiger Television, an independent production collective that produces segments critiquing the information industry; Deep Dish TV, a grassroots satellite network that distributes free-thinking programming to public access cable channels nationwide; and Not Channel Zero, a collective of young African-American "camcorder activists" whose motto is "The Revolution, Televised." And then there is academy hacking—cultural studies, conducted outside university walls, by insurgent intellectuals.

Thus, culture jamming assumes many guises; let us consider, in greater detail, some of its more typical manifestations.

SNIPING AND SUBVERTISING

"Subvertising," the production and dissemination of anti-ads that deflect Madison Avenue's attempts to turn the consumer's attention in a given direction, is an ubiquitous form of jamming. Often, it takes the form of "sniping"—illegal, late-night sneak attacks on public space by operatives armed with posters, brushes, and buckets of wheatpaste.

Adbusters, a Vancouver, B.C.-based quarterly that critiques consumer culture, enlivens its pages with acid satires. "Absolut Nonsense," a cunningly-executed spoof featuring a suspiciously familiar-looking bottle, proclaimed: "Any suggestion that our advertising campaign has contributed to alcoholism, drunk driving or wife and child beating is absolute nonsense. No one pays any attention to advertising." Ewen, himself a covert jammer, excoriates conspicuous consumption in his "Billboards of the Future"—anonymously-mailed Xerox broadsides like his ad for "Chutzpah: cologne for women & men, one

Culture jammers refuse the role of passive shoppers, renewing the notion of a public discourse.

splash and you'll be demanding the equal distribution of wealth." Guerrilla Girls, a cabal of feminist artists that bills itself as "the conscience of the art world," is known for savagely funny, on-target posters, one of which depicted a nude odalisque in a gorilla mask, asking, "Do women have to get naked to get into the Met. Museum?" Los Angeles's Robbie Conal covers urban walls with the information age equivalent of Dorian Gray's portrait: grotesque renderings of Oliver North, Ed Meese, and other scandal-ridden politicians. "I'm interested in counter-advertising," he says, "using the streamlined sign language of advertising in a kind of reverse penetration."

For gay activists, subvertising and sniping have proven formidable weapons. A March, 1991 *Village Voice* report from the frontlines of the "outing" wars made mention of "Absolutely Queer" posters, credited to a phantom organization called OUTPOST, appearing on Manhattan buildings. One, sparked by the controversy over the perceived homophobia in *Silence of the Lambs*, featured a photo of Jodie Foster, with the caption: "Oscar Winner. Yale Graduate. Ex-Disney Moppet. Dyke." Queer Nation launched a "Truth in Advertising" poster campaign that sent up New York Lotto ads calculated to part the poor and their money; in them, the official tagline, "All You Need is a Dollar and a Dream" became "All You Need is a Three-Dollar Bill and a Dream." The graphics collective Gran Fury, formerly part of ACT UP, has taken its sharp-tongued message even further: a superslick Benetton parody ran on buses in San Francisco and New York in 1989. Its headline blared "Kissing Doesn't Kill: Greed and Indifference Do" over a row of kissing cou-

ples, all of them racially-mixed and two of them gay. "We are trying to fight for attention as hard as Coca-Cola fights for attention," says group member Loring Mcalpin. "[I]f anyone is angry enough and has a Xerox machine and has five or six friends who feel the same way, you'd be surprised how far you can go."

MEDIA HOAXING

Media hoaxing, the fine art of hoodwinking journalists into covering exhaustively-researched, elaborately-staged deceptions, is culture jamming in its purest form. Conceptual con artists like Joey Skaggs dramatize the dangers inherent in a press that seems to have forgotten the difference between the public good and the bottom line, between the responsibility to enlighten and the desire to entertain.

Skaggs has been flimflamming journalists since 1966, pointing up the self-replicating, almost viral nature of news stories in a wired world. The trick, he confides, "is to get someone from an out-of-state newspaper to run a story on something sight unseen, and then you Xerox that story and include it in a second mailing. Journalists see that it has appeared in print and think, therefore, that there's no need to do any further research. That's how a snowflake becomes a snowball and finally an avalanche, which is the scary part. There's a point at which it becomes very difficult to believe anything the media tells you."

In 1976, Skaggs created the Cathouse For Dogs, a canine bordello that offered a "savory selection" of doggie Delilahs, ranging from pedigree (Fifi, the French poodle) to mutt (Lady the Tramp). The ASPCA was outraged, the *Soho News* was incensed, and

ABC devoted a segment to it which later received an Emmy nomination for best news broadcast of the year. In time, Skaggs reappeared as the leader of Walk Right!, a combat-booted Guardian Angels-meet-Emily Post outfit determined to improve sidewalk etiquette, and later as Joe Bones, head of a Fat Squad whose tough guy enforcers promised, for a fee, to prevent overweight clients from cheating on diets. As Dr. Joseph Gregor, Skaggs convinced UPI and New York's WNBC-TV that hormones extracted from mutant cockroaches could cure arthritis, acne, and nuclear radiation sickness.

After reeling in the media outlets who have taken his bait, Skaggs holds a conference at which he reveals his deception. "The hoax," he insists, "is just the hook. The second phase, in which I reveal the hoax, is the important part. As Joey Skaggs, I can't call a press conference to talk about how the media has been turned into a government propaganda machine, manipulating us into believing we've got to go to war in the Middle East. But as a jammer, I can go into these issues in the process of revealing a hoax."

BILLBOARD BANDITRY

Lastly, there is billboard banditry, the phenomenon that inspired Negativland's coinage. Australia's BUGA UP stages hit-and-run "demotions," or anti-promotions, scrawling graffiti on cigarette or liquor ads. The group's name is at once an acronym for "Billboard-Utilizing Graffitiists Against Unhealthy Promotions" and a pun on "bugger up," Aussie slang for "screw up." In like fashion, African-American activists have decided to resist cigarette and liquor ads targeting communities of color by any means necessary. Describing Reverend

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PULL QUOTE

Calvin Butts and fellow Harlem residents attacking a Hennesey billboard with paint and rollers, *Z* magazine's Michael Kamber reports, "In less than a minute there's only a large white blotch where moments before the woman had smiled coyly down at the street." Chicago's Reverend Michael Pfleger is a comrade-in-arms; he and his Operation Clean defaced—some prefer the term "refaced"—approximately 1,000 cigarette and alcohol billboards in 1990 alone. "It started with the illegal drug problem," says Pfleger. "But you soon realize that the number-one killer isn't crack or heroin, but tobacco. And we realized that to stop tobacco and alcohol we [had] to go after the advertising problem."

San Francisco's Billboard Liberation Front, together with Truth in Advertising, a band of "midnight billboard editors" based in Santa Cruz, snap motorists out of their rush hour trances with deconstructed, reconstructed billboards. In the wake of the *Valdez* disaster, the BLF reinvented a radio promo—"Hits Happen. New X-100"—as "Shit Happens—New Exxon"; TIA turned "Tropical Blend. The Savage Tan" into "Typical Blend. Sex in Ads."

Inspired by a newsflash that plans were underway to begin producing neutron bombs, a Seattle-based trio known as SSS reworked a Kent billboard proclaiming "Hollywood Bowled Over By Kent III Taste!" to read "Hollywood Bowled Over By Neutron Bomb!," replacing the cigarette pack with a portrait of then-President Ronald Reagan.

Artfux, and the newly-formed breakaway group Cicada Corps of Artists, are New Jersey-based agitprop collectives who snipe and stage neo-Situationist happenings. On one occasion, Artfux members joined painter Ron English for a tutorial of sorts, in which English instructed the group in the fine art of billboard banditry.

Painting and mounting posters conceptualized by English, Artfux joined the New York artist on a one-day, all-out attack on Manhattan. One undercover operation used math symbols to spell out the corporate equation for animal murder and ecological disaster: A hapless-looking cow plus a death's-head equalled a McDonald's polystyrene clamshell. "Food, foam and Fun!," the tagline taunted. In a similar vein, the group mocked "Smooth Joe," the Camel cigarettes camel, turning his phallic nose into a flaccid penis and his sagging lips into bobbing testicles. One altered billboard adjured, "Drink Coca-Cola—It Makes You Fart," while another showed a seamed, careworn Uncle Sam opposite the legend, "Censorship is good because — — —!"

"Corporations and the government have the money and the means to sell anything they want, good or bad," noted Artfux member Orlando Cuevas in a *Jersey Journal* feature on the group. "We...[are] ringing the alarm for everyone else."

GUERRILLA SEMIOTICS

Culture jammers often make use of what might be called "guerrilla" semiotics—analytical techniques not unlike those employed by scholars to decipher the signs and symbols that constitute a culture's secret language, what literary theorist Roland Barthes called "systems of signification." These systems, notes Barthes in the introduction to *Elements of Semiology*, comprise nonverbal as well as verbal modes of communication, encompassing "images, gestures, musical sounds, objects, and the complex associations of all these."

It is no small irony—or tragedy—that semiotics, which seeks to make explicit the implicit meanings in the sign language of

society, has become pop culture shorthand for an academic parlor trick useful in divining the hidden significance in *Casablanca*, Disneyland, or our never-ending obsession with Marilyn Monroe. In paranoid pop psych (Vance Packard's *The Hidden Persuaders*, Wilson Bryan Key's *Subliminal Seduction*), semiotics offers titillating decryptions of naughty advertising. "This preoccupation with subliminal advertising," writes Ewen, "is part of the legendary life of post-World War II American capitalism: the word 'SEX' written on the surface of Ritz crackers, copulating bodies or death images concealed in ice cubes, and so forth." Increasingly, advertising assumes this popular mythology: a recent print ad depicted a rocks glass filled with ice-cubes, the words "Absolut vodka" faintly discernible on the their craggy, shadowed surfaces. The tagline: "Absolut Subliminal."

All of which makes semiotics seem trivial although it is an inherently political project. Marshall Blonsky has called semiotics "a defense against information sickness, the 'too-muchness' of the world," fulfilling Marshall McLuhan's prophecy that "just as we now try to control atom-bomb fallout, so we will one day try to control media fallout." As used by culture jammers, semiotics is an essential tool in the all-important undertaking of making sense of the world, its networks of power, the encoded messages that flicker ceaselessly along its communication channels.

This is not to say that all of the jammers mentioned in this essay knowingly derive their ideas from semiotics or are even familiar with it, only that their ad hoc approach to cultural analysis has much in common with the semiotician's attempt to "read between the lines" of culture considered as a text. Most jammers have little interest in the deliria that result

from long immersion in the academic vacuum, breathing pure theory. They intuitively refuse the rejection of engaged politics typical of postmodernists like Baudrillard, a disempowering stance that too often results in an overeagerness for ringside seats at the gotterdammerung. The L.A. Weekly's disquieting observation that Baudrillard "loves to observe the liquidation of culture, to experience the delivery from depth" calls to mind Walter Benjamin's pronouncement that mankind's "self-alienation has reached such a degree that it can experience its own destruction as an aesthetic pleasure of the first order." Jammers, in contrast, are attempting to reclaim the public space ceded to the chimeras of Hollywood and Madison Avenue, to restore a sense of equilibrium to a society sickened by the vertiginous whirl of TV culture.

These guerrilla semioticians are in pursuit of new myths stitched from the material of their own lives, a fabric of experiences and aspirations where neither the depressive stories of an apolitical intelligentsia nor the repressive fictions of corporate media's Magic Kingdom obtain. "The images that bombard and oppose us must be reorganized," insist Stuart and Elizabeth Ewen. "If our critique of commodity culture points to better alternatives, let us explore—in our own billboards of the future—what they might be." Even now, hackers, slashers, and snipers—culture jammers all—are rising to that challenge.

POINTS OF DEPARTURE

"Billboard Liberation Front Manual,"
Processed World #25, Summer/Fall 1990,

pps. 22-6. This and other back issues may be ordered from 41 Sutter Street, #1829, San Francisco, CA 94104. The BLF has also published The Art and Science of Billboard Improvement (San Francisco: Los Cabrones Press, \$1.50). No more information is available as this is written; writing to Processed World, which acts as an intermediary for the BLF, might prove fruitful.

William Board, "Alter a Billboard," CoEvolution Quarterly, Summer 1983, pps. 114-116. Do's and don't's for would-be "midnight billboard editors," written by a pseudonymous member of Truth in Advertising. \$7, Whole Earth Review, 27 Gate Five Road, Sausalito, CA 94965.

Gareth Branwyn, "Jamming the Media," in Black Hole, ed. by Carolyn Hughes, (Baltimore: Institute for Publications Design, Yale Gordon College of Liberal Arts, University of Baltimore, 1992). This essay, as well as the companion pieces in this underground omnibus, explore the interstice between cyberpunk and culture jamming. Contact Gareth Branywn at 4905 Old Dominion Drive, Arlington, Virginia, 22207.

Robbie Conal, Art Attack: The Midnight Politics of a Guerrilla Artist (New York: Harper Perennial, 1992). At last: the ideal gift for insurrectionists—a coffee table art book about a wheatpaste warrior.

Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching, Dave Foreman and Bill Haywood, eds. (Tucson: Ned Ludd Books, 1987). Chapter 8, "Propaganda," includes sections on "Billboard Revision" and "Correcting Forest Service Signs." The jury is

still out on Earth First!, which often veers disconcertingly close to neo-Luddite knee-jerking (hence the name of the publishing company). That said, the authors' folksy pragmatism, anarcho-libertarian humor, and iron-spined resolve in the face of bulldozers and chainsaws is truly inspiring.

Abbie Hoffman, The Best of Abbie Hoffman (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1989). Chapter 43, "Guerrilla Broadcasting," includes nuts-and-bolts "how to" sections on pirate radio and outlaw TV.

Loompanics Unlimited, a distributor of fringe publications, is an invaluable source for titles on hacking; psychological warfare; Zeke Teflon's Complete Manual of Pirate Radio; Muzzled Media: How to Get the News You've Been Missing!, by Gerry L. Dexter; and more. Loompanics' 1988 catalogue includes Erwin R. Strauss's "Pirate Broadcasting," a historical and philosophical inquiry into the titular phenomenon. Write P.O. Box 1197, Port Townsend, WA 98368 for a catalogue.

Roar! The Paper Tiger Television Guide to Media Activism, The Paper Tiger Television Collective, eds. (New York: The Paper Tiger Television Collective, 1991). This thoroughgoing, irreplaceable guide to culture jamming proves, to mutilate Mao, that "power springs from the barrel of a camcorder." An essay by Schiller, together with a lengthy "how to" section, make this a must. Write to 339 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10012. ©

As used by culture jammers, semiotics is an essential tool in the all-important undertaking of making sense of the world

END

slim MOON

1 Mecca Normal
The Eagle and The Poodle
Matador

2 Men's Recovery Project
Normal Man 7"
Gravity

3 Yoko Ono
Rising
Capitol

4 Danielle Howle
About To Burst
Simple Machines

5 Willie
Spirit
Island

1 Lifetime
Hello Bastards LP
Jade Tree

Incredibly poppy and deliriously catchy. This record is the soundtrack of my good times.

2 Converge
Petitioning the Empty Skies, 7"
Ferret

This was one of those few records that I was sent to dole out to reviewers and on one listen decided that it must be mine. Great hardcore and awesome metal riffs.

3 His Hero Is Gone
The Dead of Night 7"
Prank

This is a grabbing record, it's simultaneously slow and gloomy and super-fast and discordant. Seeing them live was the icing on the cake!

4 Hiatus
self-titled LP
Profane Existence

This great crust band suddenly found beauty by adding creative breaks in their songs and just mastering the idea of being a little noisy and emo. This record is just way too good.

5 In/humanity
The Nutty Anti-Christ LP
Passive Fist

Even though I just got this record I must place it here. These guys just destroy and thrash out of control. Crushing hardcore.

will DANDY

bob CONRAD

1 Superchunk
Here's Where the Strings Come In CD
Merge Records (late '95)

2 Discount
Wonder Pulled Me Under 7"
Liquid Meat Records

3 My Pal Trigger
the riverview mentality 7"
Mighty Idy Records

4 Red Rocket
July CD
Excursion Records

5 Snuff
demmamussabebonk CD
Fat Wreck Chords

iane HEX

in no particular order

1 Trainspotting
Book by Irvine Welsh Movie (Miramax/Channel 4 Films) Soundtrack (EMI)

2 Ash
1977 LP
Infectious Records

3 Supergrass
Going Out 7"
Parlophone

4 I'm Johnny and I Don't Give a Fuck #2
PO Box 21533 1850
Commercial Dr. Vancouver
BC Canada V5N 4A0

5 Little Spanner #2
PO Box F1P87 Leeds,
England LS6 1YE

dave HAKE

1 Chrome Cranks
"Dead Cool" LP
Crypt

The ultimate in destructo-blues transgression. "Way Out Lover" captivates. This is a true romance set to dreary twilight vulcanism.

2 Spinanes
"The Strand" LP
Sub Pop

An aural postcard from the best years of your life. Moves you like the cinema. A husky voice whispering in your ear, and the metronomic playback of twenty some odd years of romancing the night away.

3 Karp/Rye Coalition
Split LP
Troubleman

Two great tastes who will always taste great together. A good match. Heavy rhythm feedback banging down on your head like a knuckle sandwich. Exquisite.

4 Blacktop
"I've Got A Baad Feeling About This" LP
In The Red

An upbeat Twin Peaks soundtrack meets the good singing, and the good playing. A true humdinger of the blues deconstruction set. Underappreciated and overplayed in the locality of Dave Hake's bedroom.

5 The Strike
"A Conscience Left to Struggle With Pockets Full of Rust" LP
Johann's Face

The definitive record for the best Twin Cities local act around. Anthemic becomes the right word in the right way. Enough hooks here to hang your coat on and stick around awhile.

Being the zine person that I am, I'm turning in my top five zines of this year instead. I know, I'm a geek.

1 ATR
Eric Boehme, 2634
Fairfield #2, Chicago IL
60647

2 Con(tra)science
Brian Alft, POB 8344,
Mpls MN 55408

3 Temp Slave!
Jeff Kelly, POB 8284,
Madison WI 53708

4 Fireball
Brian Ralph, 2 College
St, RISD Box 406,
Providence RI 02903

5 Spectacle #3
Theo Witsell, 1010 Scott
St, Little Rock, Ar, 72202.

ien ANGEL

1 Bluetip
Dischord #101

2 Jawbox
Jawbox

3 Team Dres
Captain My Cap
Chainsaw

1 Girls Against Boys
House of GVSB
Touch and Go

what new music can sound like without being either stupid or cliched.

2 Sleater-Kinney
Call the Doctor
Chainsaw

I love angry people, especially when they can actually make you feel it too.

3 Corm
Audio Flame Kit
Dischord

Making a short attention span work for the music, these guys do everything from beauty to dissonance, sometimes within the same song.

4 Six Finger Satellite
Paranormalized
Sub Pop

Music to have epileptic seizures, the great vocalists to emerge since Haynes became a heavy metal Devo with a much less settled melody, or anything else, for that.

5 Don Caballero
2
Touch and Go

What an early seventies prog-rock like Yes would sound like without pid vocals and with many, many effects pedals. Oh, and a petri dish trial sounds and huge guitars.

darren CAHR

daniel SINKER

in very particular order

1 Bikini Kill
Reject All American LP

Kill Rock Stars

Not just the best record of 1996 but, very possibly, of the decade.

2 The Promise Ring
30° Everywhere
Jade Tree

Turn it up louder & louder until your speakers distort and your ears begin to hurt, and it still won't be loud enough. Lie on your bed and let the heartbreak-ing chords crash over you, and it won't hurt enough.

covery Project
an 7"

- 3 Yoko Ono
Rising
Capitol

- 4 Danielle Howle
About To Burst
Simple Machines

- 5 Willie Nelson
Spirit
Island

iane
HEX

in no particular order

- 1 Trainspotting
Book by Irvine Welsh Movie (Miramax/Channel 4 Films) Soundtrack (EMI)

- 3 Supergrass
Going Out 7"
Parlophone

- 4 I'm Johnny and I Don't Give a Fuck #2
PO Box 21533 1850
Commercial Dr. Vancouver
BC Canada V5N 4A0

- 5 Little Spanner #2
PO Box F1P87 Leeds,
England LS6 1YE

- 2 Ash
1977 LP
Infectious Records

Being the zine person that i am, I'm turning in my top five zines of this year instead. I know, I'm a geek.

- 1 ATR
Eric Boehme, 2634
Fairfield #2, Chicago IL
60647

- 2 Con(tra)science
Brian Aft, POB 8344,
Mpls MN 55408

- 3 Temp Slave!
Jeff Kelly, POB 8284,
Madison WI 53708

- 4 Fireball
Brian Ralph, 2 College
St, RISD Box 406,
Providence RI 02903

- 5 Spectacle #3
Theo Witsell, 1010 Scott
St, Little Rock, Ar, 72202.

I hear #4 should be out by the time this is printed.

Honorable mentions

- Mousie
- I'm Johnny and i Don't Give a Fuck
- Girls In Trouble on the Interstate
- Pants that Don't Fit.

ien
ANGEL

eric
ACTION

In no Order

- 1 Registrators
Terminal Boredom

- 2 Teengenerate
all of it that came out this last year

- 3 Problematics
2 song single
Rip Off

- 4 Bikini Kill
Reject All American LP
Kill Rock Stars

- 5 Oblivians
Popular Favorites LP

dave
HAKE

- 1 Chrome Cranks
"Dead Cool" LP
Crypt

The ultimate in destructo-blues transgression. "Way Out Lover" captivates. This is a true romance set to dreary twilight vulcanism.

- 2 Spinanes
"The Strand" LP
Sub Pop

An aural postcard from the best years of your life. Moves you like the cinema. A husky voice whispering in your ear, and the metronomic playback of twenty some odd years of romancing the night away.

- 3 Karp/Rye Coalition
Split LP
Troubleman

Two great tastes who will always taste great together. A good match. Heavy rhythm feedback banging down on your head like a knuckle sandwich. Exquisite.

- 4 Blacktop
"I've Got A Baad Feeling About This" LP
In The Red

An upbeat Twin Peaks soundtrack meets the good singing, and the good playing. A true humdinger of the blues deconstruction set. Underappreciated and overplayed in the locality of Dave Hake's bedroom.

- 5 The Strike
"A Conscience Left to Struggle With Pockets Full of Rust" LP
Johann's Face

The definitive record for the best Twin Cities local act around. Anthemic becomes the right word in the right way. Enough hooks here to hang your coat on and stick around awhile.

- 1 Bluetip
Dischord #101

- 2 Jawbox
Jawbox

- 3 Team Dresch
Captain My Captain
Chainsaw

- 4 Slackjaw
A Sinking Ship loves Company

- 5 Jawbreaker
Dear You

brett
VAN HORN

- 1 Girls Against Boys
House of GVS
Touch and Go

what new music can sound like without being either stupid or cliched.

- 2 Sleater-Kinney
Call the Doctor
Chainsaw

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What an early seventies prog-rock outfit like Yes would sound like without the stupid vocals and with many, many more effects pedals. Oh, and a fetish for industrial sounds and huge guitars.

darren
CAHR

in no particular order

- 1 Disembodied
live and Existence in Suicide CD

- 2 Lifetime
live and maybe that new 7" (Boy's No Good)

- 3 Converge
Petitioning the Empty Sky 7"

- 4 Deadguy
Fixation on a Coworker CD

- 5 Klikatat Ikatowi
CD

matt
MILLER

daniel
SINKER

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Turn it up louder & louder until your speakers distort and your ears begin to hurt, and it still won't be loud enough. Lie on your bed and let the heartbreaking chords crash over you, and it won't hurt enough.

- 3 Holly Golightly
The Good Things 10" EP
Damaged Goods
The title says it all.

- 4 The Strike
A Conscience Left to Struggle with Pockets Full of Rust LP
Johannes Face

Stripped down mod stylee with powerful union-yes lyrics. I liked it so much I designed the record jacket!

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Rising
Capitol

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2 song single
Rip Off

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Reject All American LP
Kill Rock Stars

5 Oblivians
Popular Favorites LP

- 1 Stitches**
"Two New Ones"
- 2 Chinese Millionaire**
the first 7"
- 3 New Bomb Turndown**
latest 7"
Fat Wreck Chords

19

1 Bluetip
Dischord #101

2 Jawbox
Jawbox

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Captain My Captain
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could see myself doing that, but
won't. I'm sure I probably forgot
the five records I really think are
the best. So it goes.

1 Hell No
Adios Armageddon CD
Reservoir Records

2 Jejeune
Junk CD
Big Wheel Recreation

3 Pain
Midgets With Guns CD
Goggins Records.

3 Dismemberment Plan
"?" CD

4 Lifetime
Hello Bastards CD
Jade Tree

5 Gameface
Three to get ready CD
Dr. Strange Records.

5 Promise Ring
30 Degrees Everywhere
Jade Tree.

in very particular order

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The Good Things 10"
EP

Damaged Goods
The title says it all.

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Struggle with Pockets
Full of Rust LP*
Johannes Face

Stripped down mod stylee with
powerful union-yes lyrics. I liked
it so much I designed the record
jacket!

5 Impetus Inter
*An Infinite Capacity
for Romance*
Cerebellum

A modern masterpiece. A year
too late and a decade ahead
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daniel
SINKER

Willie Nelson

spirit
and

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greg
GARTLAND

- 1 Stitches
"Two New Ones" 7"
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latest 7"
Fat Wreck Chords
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"Pissin' Out the Poison"
singles comp
- 5 Bristles
"Last Year's Youth" LP

1996

josh
HOOTEN

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- 4 Lifetime
Hello Bastards CD
Jade Tree
- 5 Gameface
Three to get ready CD
Dr. Strange Records.
- 5 Promise Ring
30 Degrees Everywhere CD
Jade Tree.

Another year goes by, another
million punk records get
released. But what, out of
everything released in 1996
was the very best? We asked
the columnists & reviewers of
Punk Planet to compile their
lists of the best five things.

kim
BAE

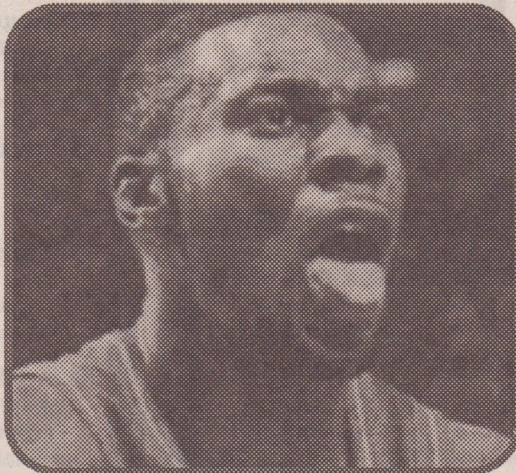
- 1 Descendents
Everything Sucks 12"
Epitaph
From the kings of pop-punk comes my
favorite album of the year.
- 2 Anti-Flag
Kill Kill Kill 7"
Ripe Records
Yeah, anthemic late 80s style punk/hard-
core. I love this stuff.
- 3 Weston
Got Beat Up 12"
Go Kart
Cheese rock at its best.
- 4 New Bomb Turks
Pissin' Out the Poison singles
comp
- 4 Buzzkill
Meat is Dinner 7"
Alternative Tentacles
Mmm, meat.
- 5 Avail
4 AM Friday 12"
Lookout!
Is it possible for these guys to put out
anything mediocre?

PUNK PLANET'S NBA PICKS

1996-1997

BY PAT WEST

Basketball, the sport of kings. Yeah, yeah, we all know how punk rockers are supposed to hate sports (7 Seconds, anyone?) but let's put aside the fears of jock mentality and corporate-ties for a second (hey, even Kevin Seconds now sports a basketball tattoo). Where else but in the NBA do you get a population of 90% black guys earning millions of dollars just by getting tons of rich white people to watch them play hoops? So, here is Punk Planet's official dissection of the 1996-1997 NBA season. Of course, by the time this issue comes out, the season will be 40 games old or so, but we stand by our



predictions (barring any major injuries or trades!). All my hoops predictions are, as usual, perfect. After the 94-95 season I outpicked the NY Times, Sports Illustrated, and all those dumb NBA preview magazines. I checked 'em, motherfucker!. So check it out, if only to show up your schoolmates and co-workers who drive you nuts talking about basketball all day long! So here we go: arena regular season predictions, playoff picks and awards plus you get the punkest player on each team, as well as a handy one-liner you can say that'll make it seem like you know hoops about the team. It's all here!

ATLANTIC DIVISION

#1- NEW YORK KNICKS. Off-season trades and free-agent signings really bolstered this team's offensive weapons. Patrick Ewing is old school, Larry Johnson is an asshole who can score, and Allan Houston can shoot the lights out. Fucking New York rules (especially with Shaq in L.A.).

Punkest player: Charles Oakley- he's hardcore even though he's got no real talent except for beating the shit out of other forwards and getting rebounds.

"New York is back in the hunt with L.J. and Houston."

#2- ORLANDO MAGIC. Penny takes over with Shaq going to Hollywood to make more bad movies and does an admirable job. They've got Felton Spencer at center who ain't so bad, you'll see. Penny may get MVP this year if the Magic win 50 games.

Punkest player: Anthony Bonner- he travels every time he touches the ball and gets traded 3 times each season, but he can dunk OK. Scary thing is, he gets about \$800,000 to do it.

"Penny's rad but the rest relied too much on Shaq."

#3- WASHINGTON BULLETS. God (that being NBA Commissioner Stern) decided to make up his own rules and give Juwan Hoard to the Bullets for the hell of it. So now the starting 5 in DC is Howard, Chris Webber, big old Muresan, Calbert Cheaney and Rod Strickland. Christ, on paper they should win 60 games, but we all know better, don't we? Could be a force, but they're too dumb to realize it.

Punkest player: Chris Webber- as a freshman in the NCAA title game, he had his teammates cheer "Let your nuts hang!" as a rallying cry on national television, much to the chagrin of CBS.

"Webber's always injured and they need more time."

#4- MIAMI HEAT. They got fucked over the free-agency frenzy this summer and now must rely on Alonzo Mourning and Tim Hardaway coupled with the Nazi-like teachings of coach Pat Riley to win. Good luck, guys. They'll be OK, but I ain't paying shit to see 'em.

Punkest player: Tim Hardaway- shoots the rock like one of Jerry's Kids but that crossover dribble... vicious!

"Riley's an asshole who pisses off players and will get nothing outta 'Zo, he's really a power forward not a center."

#5- PHILADELPHIA SIXERS. No one else expects 'em to do so well, but us punkers know something others don't: don't ever doubt guys with shaved heads and tattoos! Enter rookie and #1 pick Allen Iverson and Derrick Coleman, two

guys with much to prove. Factor in Jerry Stackhouse and the Phillie Phanatic won't make you think they smoke crack at halftime like last year.

Punkest player: Allen Iverson- he's a kid who goes nuts on the court and is hilarious to watch.

"Who cares if they win games, they'll be crazy to watch."

#6- BOSTON CELTICS. Bunch of honkies and perennial backups who are forced to start in Beantown. Dino Radja is good, Dee Brown can jump to the moon, but still.... ack!

Punkest player: Dino Radja- he thinks the NBA has sissy fans because when he played in Europe enemy fans would throw rocks at him and spit on him while telling him he'll get AIDS.

"Bird is retired, and Reggie and Len are dead. They suck!"

#7 NEW JERSEY NETS. It's too bad they are gonna suck because a lot of the players are really cool. With Xavier McDaniel (yes- he's back!), Jayson Williams, Vincent Askew, Kerry Kittles and Robert Pack, they could have been a decent, scrappy team with good chemistry but their coach SUCKS!!

Punkest player: Jayson Williams- grew up on the Lower East Side and is really cool to talk to.

"Calipari's old UMass team could beat these losers."

CENTRAL

#1- CHICAGO BULLS. DUH. Believe the hype.

Punkest player: Steve Kerr (no- not Rodman!)- only this barely 6' white guy has the guts to get into a fist fight with Jordan in a Bulls practice because Michael is an asshole. He also loves the Simpsons! Yeah!

"Pippen played too much hoops for a year straight and if he goes down injured, it'll hurt Jordan bad."

#2- INDIANA PACERS. They've got shooters (Reggie Miller), bangers (the Davis boys), and smoothies (Derrick McKey and new guy Jalen Rose). They bore the fuck out of you, but they'll do well this year.

Punkest player: Rik Smits- a goofy white guy from some foreign country, an outcast. Can't we all relate!?

"I like the new guards, they could go far."

#3- ATLANTA HAWKS. They can play some great D in Atlanta, where no one gives a fuck about this team.

Dikembe Mutombo, Steve Smith and Mookie Blaylock will give some teams major fits, but offense may be lacking. Coach Wilkens rules. Beware of the Hawks!

Punkiest player: Mookie Blaylock- it's all in the name, motherfucker.

"With Dikembe in the middle, they got so much better no one realizes it. How you gonna out-coach Lenny?"

#4- CLEVELAND CAVALIERS. How they almost won 50 games last year is mind-boggling because they have no offense, but, man, they can play mean D in Clevehole. Lots of role players, though, and too many other teams have gotten better for the Cavs to excel.

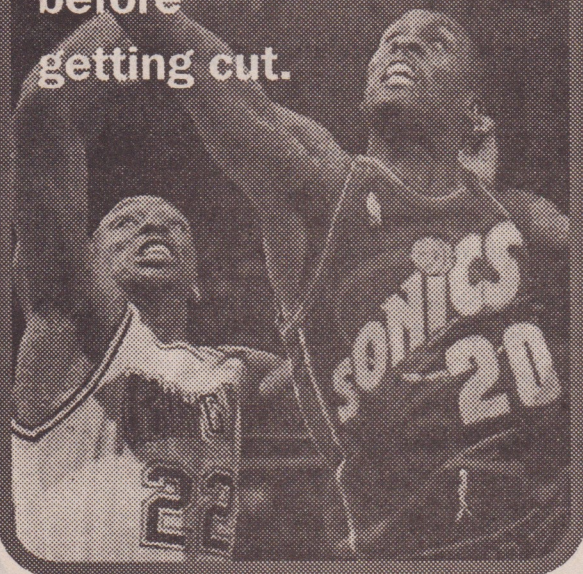
Punkiest player: Mark West- always pull for your brother. "Name me the starting five! I dare ya!"

#5- DETROIT PISTONS. New uniforms, Grant Hill, and... what else? This team could suck real bad, but we'll give 'em a little credit. But remember: Mr. Hill is not close to as good as everyone thinks.

Punkiest player: Stacey Augmon- he looks like Hawk from "Spencer For Hire" and is a southpaw.

"Grant Hill is a wimp and the refs protect him. He's like a sissy Jordan."

This team is so awesome that draft picks are lucky to stay in Seattle for one year before getting cut.



#6 MILWAUKEE BUCKS. Last year was a real letdown and this year will be the same because Glenn Robinson is a complete dipshit who shoots 35% from the field. The CT connection of Vin Baker and Ray Allen may be OK, but they need too much help.

Punkiest player: Vin Baker- any guy who still goes to the cheap seafood joint in his hometown and gets a large helping of fried clams is cool with me.

"Glenn Robinson sucks."

#7- CHARLOTTE HORNETS. With demon-like Anthony Mason and Vlade Divac joining Glen Rice, the Hornets will be like 5 guys playing... well... like 5 guys who have to play together without a choice. Mason is the saving grace.

Punkiest player: Anthony Mason- no doubt, he rules. I mean, fuck, he gets in fights with cops, punches fans in bars, and has 5 full-size arcade games in his front hallway along with Jackie Chan films playing in his family room.

"Think Mason will beat up a teammate before the season's up?"

#8- Toronto Raptors. What the hell, this is Canada, go play hockey or something! Last year's Rookie of the Year Stoudamire sucks, I shit you not, and Marcus Camby is a paper tiger. Even their damn uniforms look fucking stupid.

Punkiest player: Hubert Davis- only because he used to be the only Knick who lived in Manhattan.

"Isn't Toronto a CBA team?"

MIDWEST

#1- UTAH JAZZ. The Mormons do it again this year; more of Stockton to Karl Malone while role players do their thing. God, they're boring and piss me off, but they win lots of games.

Punkiest player: Byron Russell- can dunk well.

"Same old, same old."

#2- SAN ANTONIO SPURS. They always win tons of games in the regular season then fold in the playoffs, so be prepared because it's gonna happen again. David Robinson is good. But Vinny Del Negro and Avery Johnson as starting guards are pathetic. They also added the two biggest losers in NBA history: Charles Smith and Dominique Wilkins! Ha-ha!

Punkiest player: Carl Herrera- a Cuban with a bald head who's got sweet moves.

"Robinson and Charles Smith- the two biggest wimps on one team! Don't tell me they don't miss Rodman!"

#3- HOUSTON ROCKETS. They only have 3 players left after the big trade: Hakeem Olajuwon, Clyde Drexler and Charles Barkley. Well, they got 9 others, but they won't be allowed to shoot the ball. They'll slack all season long until playoffs. Lookout!

Punkest player: Sam Mack- he's from the CBA and he's got a name that sounds like a 70's blaxploitation movie character.

"Injury-free, they will be awesome."

#4- DALLAS MAVERICKS. Could suck, could be OK, who knows with these crackheads. Hell, the players started hating one another because their girlfriends started to fool around with the other players! Swingers! Yeah, you've got Kidd, Mash and JJ, but add some key role-players like Montross, Chris Gatling and rookie Samaki Walker and you've got a good blueprint for success.

Punkest player: Chris Gatling- he wears a headband.

"Those 3 babies will never get it together."

#5- DENVER NUGGETS. They've got players in all the right places, the thing is: who the fuck is gonna score? Bryan Stith, Mark Jackson and LaPhonso Ellis all give you around 14 points each. Big man, bad man Antonion McDyess will not go over 20 points per game, no way in hell, even though he's got game. In every aspect, the whole team is just a notch below.

Punkest player: McDyess- not sure why, but he's cool, and punk is cool!

"All that trading didn't do much at all."

#6- MINNESOTA TIMBERWOLVES. A bunch of kids, led by no-college duo of Kevin Garnett and Stephon Marbury at the point. They may be good 5 years from now, but for now they'll get their ass kicked. Bad.

Punkest player: (tie) Stephon Marbury & Doug West- Marbury because he's from Brooklyn and has a huge panther tattoo on his arm & West because he's my brother.

"Like anyone cares about the T-Wolves except to see Garnett dunk."

#7- VANCOUVER GRIZZLIES. Any team who's top player is a white guy with a flat top & weighs 275 lbs. and goes by the name of "Big Country" is a sad team indeed. Last team in the NBA. Place your bets now.

Punkest player: Roy Rogers- hey, if you were nicknamed the Lone Ranger, you'd be punk, too.

"Aren't they an old ABA team?"



WEST

#1 LOS ANGELES LAKERS. Shaq will score so many points out West it'll be scary. These assholes have too much talent not to win mucho games, though not the modesty to not taunt their victims. Eddie Jones, Ceballos and Elden Campbell are key here. They are truly scary.

Punkest player: Nick Van Exel- he got so pissed at a ref he bumped him off his feet and onto the media table and then got ejected and suspended. Revolution!

"Shaq's retarded, he'll be waterskiing with Ceballos while a

...I was at a game once where he was cursing so much before the game that a parent had to take his child away from near the court in disgust!
Y e a h !

(talking about Gary Payton)

game is going on, I bet."

#2 SEATTLE SUPERSONICS. This team is so awesome that draft picks are lucky to stay in Seattle for one year before getting cut. Kemp, Payton, Perkins, Schrempf, Hawkins... forget it, they kick too much ass to bother explaining it to you. They score, play D, and are super aggressive. Great to watch!

Punkest player: Gary Payton- not only does he trash talk all throughout the game and then after the game, but I was at a game once where he was cursing so much before the game that a parent had to take his child away from near the court in disgust! Yeah!

"If you say one negative thing about the Sonics I will stab you with my pen."

#3- SACRAMENTO KINGS. They finally made the playoffs last year and should repeat that feat no problem again. If they had a scoring center to compliment Mitch Richmond and Brian Grant, they'd be real dangerous. A big problem will be lack of guard size and bench scoring.

Punkest player: Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf- He's the guy who refused to stand for the National Anthem and got suspended because of it.

"That back court of Richmond and Abdul-Rauf will not miss a shot."

#4- GOLDEN STATE WARRIORS. Oakland's own has been so decimated by injuries and bad trades lately they should consider themselves lucky to be where they are. Young kid Joe Smith, old schooler Chris Mullin, and slasher Latrell Sprewell could make some waves but not enough to drown any of the top teams.

Punkest player: Latrell Sprewell- he whines, cries and acts like a prick half the time and then will score 30 points and dunk in your face while calling you a punk bitch. Lovely.

"Mullin should retire."

#5- PHOENIX SUNS: By trading away fathead Charles Barkley, the Suns got more OK players than they'll know what to do with, but it helps to have a few stars in the NBA and this team has none. Young guns Michael Finley, Sam Cassell, Wesley Person and Robert Horry have potential but that don't count for shit when you are supposed to have the main guys winning games. Watch out for another big trade down in the desert before the year is done.

Punkest player: Sam Cassell: the guy looks like E.T. and has buck teeth like some Kentucky backwoods inbred. Ugly is punk.

"28 guys can't make up for Barkley—they can't all play at the same time!"

#6- PORTLAND TRAILBLAZERS. You see the players: Kenny Anderson, Isiah Rider, Cliff Robinson, Rasheed Wallace and Arvydas Sabonis... you say "hey, these guys got a damn good team!" You check out the bench and see tons of promise in Randolph Childress, Gary Trent, and rebounder Chris Dudley. You see that they get to play the Clippers, T-Wolves and Grizzlies 12 times... you are stupid. The Portland Arena will act as a nut house when these guys play, they are straight up fucking stupid except for Sabonis and he can't speak English (I wouldn't either with these guys around).

Punkest player: take you pick, they're all law-breakers who couldn't give a fuck what you say.

"Who's the probation officer coaching them now?"

#7- LOS ANGELES CLIPPERS. Pity the bastards, believe me, they'll need your sympathy. If these suckers didn't earn more \$ than the GNP of most African nations, I'd mail 'em a dollar. Rodney Rogers and Loy Vaught are very solid forwards but the guards here suck so bad it's unreal. Oh, the shame.

Punkest player: Brent Barry- skinny white guy wins the Dunk Championship by jumping from the foul line, something only Dr. J. and Michael Jordan have done.

"Someone should put those guys outta their misery." ©

MOST VALUABLE PLAYER:

- #1. Penny Hardaway
- #2. Michael Jordan
- #3. Shaq O'Neal

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Chicago wins (yes, again)

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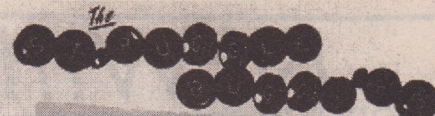
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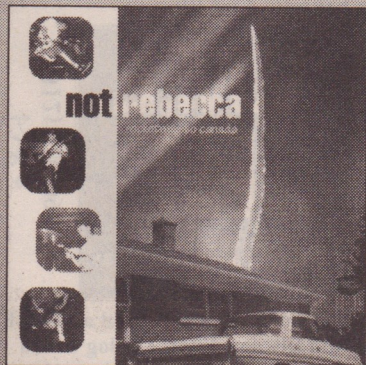
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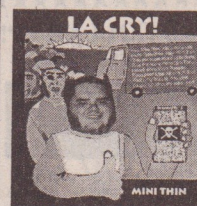
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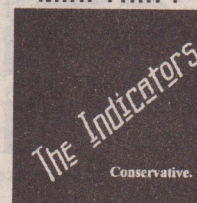
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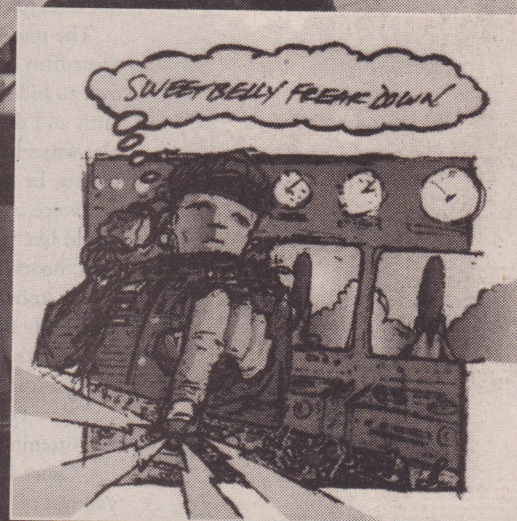
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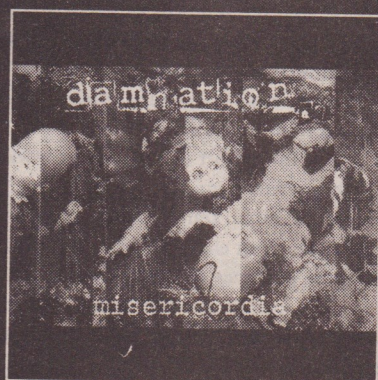
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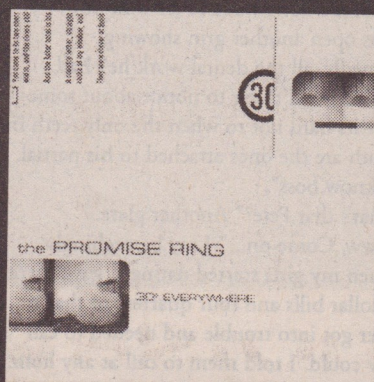
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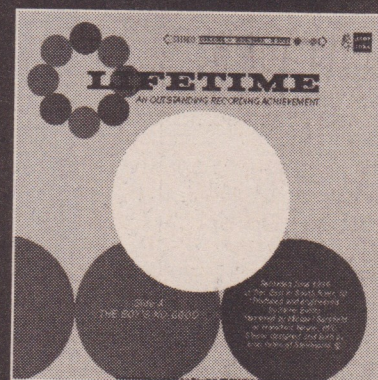
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"Hey Pete!" Nothing.

"What've you got for me today?" Nothing.

"What's got you pissed off?"

He looks at me for about 10 seconds with a deliberate glare, then goes back to watching the rain fall on the runway.

"It's always a pleasure talking to you Pete."

That got him. His face cracks and a giant grin pours out. His cheeks swallow his eyes and the scrunching of his nose pushes his dark rimmed glasses up onto his forehead. Pete's a neat guy and one of the only ones out here that I enjoy talking to, if you can call it that. Even if he's yelling at me for something someone else did, just to have someone to yell at, it's hard not to enjoy it.

The man stands about 5'5", has one of those firm beer guts that hangs just far enough over to hide his belt. Due to his mid-section girth and short arms and legs, he kind of wobbles when he walks, much like a toddler as soon as he figures out that balance conundrum. His voice is what Frog from 'Our Gang' would sound like if Darla kicked him in the balls; high, hoarse and huggable.

"Ya know Boss," I'm not really. He calls everybody that. Or Chief. Today, it's Boss.

"What's that Pete?"

"Don't interrupt me. Are you interruptin' me?"

"New Pete, just wanted to let you know I was listening."

"Cause I'll get out of this truck and yank you out of yours."

"Stay where you are. I don't want you to hurt yourself. What were you going to tell me?"

He puts on his most irresistible five year old pouty face and says as softly as he can, which is still a low roar for him,

"What if I don't want to tell you now?" then rips open another grin showing, unashamedly, all the dental work he's had done. It's an odd thing to notice about someone, but it's hard not to when the only teeth in his mouth are the ones attached to his partial.

"Ya know boss",

"What's that Pete?" Another glare.

"Awww, Come on..." I say beseechingly.

"When my girls started dating, I gave them 2 one dollar bills and four quarters so that if they ever got into trouble and needed to call me they could. I told them to call at any hour."

"That's good of you Pete."

"Of course it is. They're my daughters. What 'd you expect?" What did I expect?

"Did they ever have to?"

"Have to what?"

"Call you."

"Yeah. One night at about 3 in the morning, my youngest called me, and said this guy tried to take her pants down in the back of his car. I asked her what she did, and she told me she slapped him and ran." He took a drag off his cigarette and watched a plane land.

"So, what did you do Pete?"

"I told her she did the right thing and went and got her."

We fell silent for a few minutes after that, just watching the rain and planes fall out of the sky. I put my head in my hand and closed my eyes.

"Whatsa matter, boss? Didn't they give you enough to do today, 'cause I can find you something if you're bored."

"New Pete, I wouldn't want you to do any unnecessary work. I wouldn't want that on my conscience."

We grin at each other as my plane lands.

"That's my bird. I gotta go."

"You gonna be around here if I need you 'cause I got nothing but rookies over at USAir and this rain is gonna back things up. Turn it all to shit."

"I'll be here if you need me, buddy."

"Knew you would be."

I like fueling 737's. 10,000 pounds in the wings and the rest in the center Nice round numbers. Some of these planes have weird fuel tolerances in their wing tanks. Numbers like nine thousand four hundred eighty six pounds. Of course you round down because if you don't you'll end up dumping gallons of Jet-A jet fuel on the runway, and the boss men generally frown on anything that requires them to leave their air conditioned offices.

The way the airport fueling system works is like this; The fuel farm, that has the giant above ground tanks, transfers the fuel underground through an elaborate system of pipe lines. These pipelines surface at gates the planes pull into for loading and unloading of passengers, but are hidden beneath manhole covers. These are called fuel pits.

The way the airport fueler system works is

like this; I pull up and get a disgruntled baggage handler to back me up to the wing. I get out, hook up the 4 inch truck hose to the fuel pit. Open the fuel panel under the right wing, hook up the smaller hose from the back of the truck to the underwing fuel nozzle, open the plane's tank valves, pull the trucks finger and let the gas flow. Basically, the fuel comes from the big tanks, travels underground, up through the truck and into the plane. The duller part of the job is waiting for the plane to finish fueling, more so than the down time between flights. At least then I can find Pete or one of the others to pass the time with. When you sit under a wing for 25 minutes with nothing to do, you get bored. Other fuelers drive by occasionally. Some wave back and some look at you like you deserve to be where you are, not realizing the irony.

I saw the mid-seventies Lincoln Continental before I met 'The Man'. Faded yellow, missing front drivers side spoked hub cap, fuzzy musical notes hanging from the rear view mirror and the front Tennessee license plate, saved from his glory days back there, that said it all. ELVIS.

I had another sighting yesterday when I was on that 737. I was bored as usual when out of the thermal waves rising from the tarmac, he came. Cruising a safe distance from the back of my plane at the strictly enforced limit of 15 miles an hour. I raised my hand and shook it weakly from side to side in a feeble attempt to make contact. Just when I was beginning to lose heart, he glanced over and gave me a wave. Not just any wave. No. This was the acknowledging wave of a man unashamed of his worship of 'The King', resembling, I'm sure, a wave witnessed hundreds of times from a video tape of 'The King' live in Honolulu.

My sightings of Melvis (his real name is Melvin but what else are you going to call an Elvis impersonator with a name like Melvin) have decreased since I moved to the morning shift. He must be working overtime. I never thought I'd see the day that 'The Man' would have to work at all, much less overtime, to pay his bills.

He has the car, the burns, the dark glasses, no rims but wide arms of silver with circles cut into them. The swagger the black hair and the do are there, also. It would be easy to

mistake him for 'The Man' from an airport terminal, especially if people seriously thought he was next to them at a Piggly Wiggly checking the expiration dates on packages of Ding-Dongs last week, and I'm sure it's happened. Much like people claim they see Jesus or Mary in a dirty window at the top of a church, they'll probably tell their friends about it during one of those one-up-manship contests. I know I will.

"I talked to Vincent Price on the telephone when he ordered his Ginsu knives."

"I saw God in a sunset and he had on Oakley blades and an orange mohawk."

"Yeah," I say with a sarcastic chuckle, tossing aside their self proclaimed brushes with greatness, "Well I've passed gas with The King."

Why does everyone put a dog on the end. James Finley isn't James or Jimmy or Finley. He's Fin-dog. Clifford Williams isn't Cliff or Clifford-or Williams. He's Cliff-dog. Richard Smithers isn't Richard or Rich or Smithers. He's Big-dog. I used to call him Richard the Lionheart because of his temper and intimidating presence, but lately I've come to know him as Richard the Lion's share, for the same reason everyone else calls him Big-dog, his gut. It's bigger than Pete. There's a little-dog too but I don't know his real name.

"Boy Spike, we sure taught that cat a lesson didn't we Spike"

"Eeeeeeeyep."

This place is a lot like a dark cartoon.

Everyone here has a story. Fin-dog was in the Coast Guard but got kicked out two years short of retirement because of his drinking. Cliff-dog was in the Air Force but got kicked out four years short of retirement because his wife kept running up his credit cards, so he started dealing to pay them off and got caught. Big-dog's been working here for 18 years and is still only making \$6.00 an hour. This is the end of the line. Almost everyone here is a lifer. The company should be commended for giving these guys second chances but can't be because end of the liners are the only people that would apply for a physical labor job paying \$4.75 an hour. I'm a lifer too, but not here.

Pete drives up in a hurry "What're ya studyin' there boss?"

"I'm studying the GRE exam prep book so I can get into graduate school." I tell him as I hold it up for him to see.

"That what you wanna do?"

"Yeah."

He studies me again and says with mocking bedroom eyes,

"Get in."

"Where are we going?"

"Don't backtalk me. Now what'd I say?"

I put down my book and climb into his truck. He drives over to airside A where the overpriced eating establishments are.

"Why'd you bring me here? Are you going to wine and dine me, Pete because it's really not necessary."

"Shaddup." I do.

We go up to the Pizza Hut and he orders two personal pizzas and two large sodas.

"Boy, you must be hungry, Pete."

He just looks at me and hands me a pizza and large cup. We go back downstairs climb into his truck and head back to mine on the other side of the airport.

"Why do you want to leave me here with all these rookies?"

"There's something better for me than this. You too if you want it."

"I'm retired already, Chief."

"Why would you put your 20 years in the Marines and retire to work 80 hours a week for \$4.75 an hour, Pete?"

He looks at me and grins another of his irresistible grins, but doesn't answer my question.

We get back to my truck and eat and sit in silence for a while.

"Thanks for lunch, Pete."

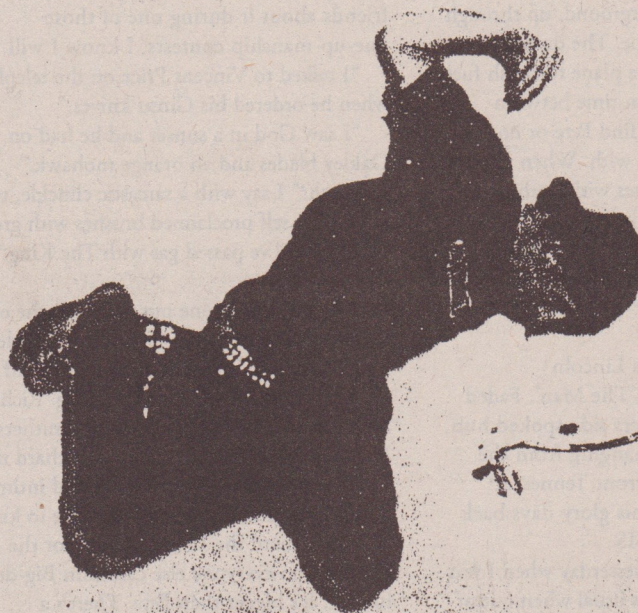
He starts up his truck, lights a cigarette and says to me,

"Don't worry about that test. You're going to do fine." then drives off. I'm going to miss him. ©



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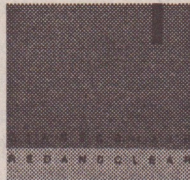
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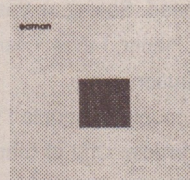
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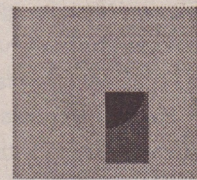
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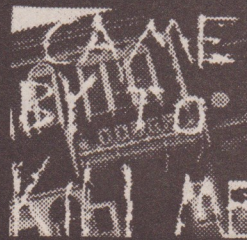
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THE FILES

The Realities of Zine Distribution

By Daniel Sinker

with counterpoints by Dok Kaper

For about a year and a half, I've tried to write a DIY Files about getting your zine distributed. Each time I would finally feel like I had the entire subject covered, something unexpected would happen with a distributor, and I'd put off writing the piece until the next issue... when some new distribution twist would rear its ugly head. Seeing as this is the last self-distributed issue of Punk Planet, I think I can safely write the final chapter in the distribution game.

I've also recruited a couple of people I've met along the way to assist me in this article. One of them, David Hirshi has written a sidebar called "Negotiating the Labarynth" which lets you see the distribution game from the point of view of someone that works at a distributor. The other person, Dok Kaper (his name has been changed to protect the innocent), will be supplying point/counterpoint to my article; if you see a little number in the article (it looks like this ❶) then that means to go check out what the good Doktor has to say. That said, let's go...

Consider This a Warning...

Distribution is a living hell.

There is nothing fun, rewarding, or even mildly amusing about getting distribution for your zine. It's exhausting, frustrating, and demeaning. You spend hours on the phone, hours staring wistfully into an empty PO Box, and hours trying to figure out where that money you don't have because you've never been paid is going to come from.

But, the reality is that until someone comes up with a better system, if you want to get your zine read by people all over the globe, people that you can't easily get your zine to by

yourself, you're going to have to face the grim reality of distribution. ❶

First Contact

Your initial contact with a distributor may shape your relationship with them for all time. Make sure you get off on the right foot. That means, whatever you do, DON'T CALL THEM BEFORE YOU MAIL THEM YOUR ZINE. Distributors are busy people. Buyers for distributors are even busier. The buyers I've talked to are overworked, underpaid, and usually have piles of zines next to their desks as tall as they are. The last thing a buyer wants to hear is your voice on the other end of the phone asking her if she'd like to see a copy of your zine. Of course she doesn't! She's got 7,000 other zines next to her desk to read. All the buyer

❶ If you want to get your zine onto the racks of the chain & most independent bookstores and newsstands you're going to have to go with the system, if you're happy with limited distribution through record distributors and direct to individual outlets then the rules are much more flexible. If you can get a magazine distributor(s) to handle your title it's going to be on their terms, not yours. The mainstream magazines float their boats and they know it. The day that a major distributor gives a better deal to *Punk Planet* or *Ben Is Dead* than they do to *Spin* or *Raygun* is the day that the major distributor has slit their own wrists. The system in place is set up for mainstream publishers, publishers who make their money from advertising, and they're quite pleased with it. The mainstream retailers like the system, the distributors like the system, the mainstream publishers like the system.

There's no way that you're going to like the system. What you can do, however, with diligence, hard work and a little luck is learn to live with the system and maybe even make some money off of newsstands. ©

Negotiating the Labarynth By David Hirshi

Don't be naive. The rules of distribution were not made to work for you. They were made to benefit retailers (mostly the chainstores) and glossy mainstream publications like *Fish & Stream*. These

rules revolve on regular publishing schedules and the destruction of unsold copies by the retailer. The system was created long before the advent of zines. This creates the old political dilemma: is it

better to work within the system or from without? You have to answer this for yourself, so arm yourself with all the information you can get. The best source is going to be from other publishers.

Distribution is also predicated upon volume: moving the largest number of units through the warehouse in the shortest amount of time. Your zine becomes just one more unit in the flow. It isn't special.

on the other end of the phone is going to tell you is to mail it in and she'll get around to looking at it when she's got time.

2 Here's what the buyers want to see from you. They need all the information possible about your 'zine, who's reading it, where, why, how often, what's being said about it, blah, blah, blah. Why do they need this information? The buyer has to figure out whether or not your title will work for their customers. The back issues are helpful because buyers want to see the evolution of your 'zine. It needs to get better with each issue. The difference between *Giant Robot* #1 and #5 is astounding. The better that your 'zine gets and the more regularly that it appears will help to improve your distribution tremendously.

Here are some other tips. Make your package to the distributor as professional as possible. Don't recycle an envelope, in your presentation letter tell them how you heard of their company, let them know your future goals for the 'zine, use Priority Mail, along with those back issues include two or three copies of the current one. A buyer may show your 'zine around the office. They may take it home and leave it there. They may show it to a particularly influential customer. They might drop their Arch Deluxe all over it. Make sure that the buyer has a clean copy of your 'zine. ☺

takes to make yours stand out quickly. The best move you can do is put together a one-sheet that you include with a copy of your zine.

She'll then hang up the phone and page every mail clerk in the office to make sure that she NEVER gets your zine.

Do I sound paranoid? I may be, but either something like that's happening or there are hundreds of copies of early issues of Punk Planet caught in some parallel dimension, 'cause every follow-up call I ever made to those buyers were always met with the same response: "I never received your magazine. Could you send it again?" They'll never receive that one either.

Beat the buyer at their own game: just send your magazine in unannounced.

Okay, not TOTALLY unannounced. Like I said, buyers have a shitload of shitty magazines to dig through so you need to do whatever it

What's a one-sheet? It's a single sheet of paper with all the pertinent information about your zine. It allows a buyer to get a good feel for your zine quickly and will serve to draw her into the zine itself. A good one-sheet should include some brief historical information (when did it start? who started it? why did it start?), information about the content (what's in the zine? why is it different than all the others?), information about the printing (current print run, how frequently it comes out, approximate page count what format (paper, newsprint etc..)), and any other information that sets your zine apart (you say you write it with your toes? you've got Larry Livermore writing columns?).

The other thing you should include on your one-sheet is any favorable reviews you've ever gotten. Reviews from 'larger' zines (Factsheet Five, Maximum, Punk Planet, all that...) help even more, because there's a good chance that the buyer has actually HEARD of those.

Make your one-sheet look attractive. Remember, it's the equivalent of a bouquet of flowers on a first date. If the buyer likes what they see on a one sheet, they're going to look even more favorably on the zine itself. They may even spend some actual time looking at the zine, instead of just skimming through it.

Now staple that one-sheet (those suckers like to wander off) to the current issues of your zine and stuff 'em into an envelope along with a few back-issues.

"Whatyoutalkin'boutWillis—did you just say back issues?" 2

Back Issues: The Big Catch 22...

Getting your zine distributed on an issue #1 is pretty damn hard to do. Sure, you're first issue may be incredible. It may be unstoppable. It may be better than SHAKE magazine (although I doubt it). But the fact of the matter is, distributors want to be sure that you can produce more than one issue. They may pick you up on the strength of a single issue, but they're going to feel a lot more comfortable if you can prove to them that you can pull it off more than once. If you want

It gets thrown into the box and shipped off the same as any other magazine. Unsold copies will be destroyed by the retailer like any other magazine. You're going to be put in line to be paid along with hundreds of other magazines. Your baby is going to be swallowed up.

That said, fortunately some distributors are flexible enough to bend the rules, and this you'll find out by asking around. Talk with other publishers who are working with several distributors. Choose a few distributors after you've done your homework and send a couple

issues and a cover letter to their buyers (see Dan's article for more detail about this). When you get to the point of negotiating terms with a distributor, you won't know what they may be flexible about unless you ask. Distribution terms include 1) when you'll get paid,

2) what percentage off the cover price the distributor takes and 3) how they report unsold copies to you. Feel free to attempt to negotiate any of these points. You, too, are going to have to be flexible though. Distribution is a dialog between publishers, retailers

to make your distributor really happy, prove to them that you can come out on a regular basis. This is also your best bet on getting paid (more on the elusive concept of getting paid in a while).

③ Being consistent with your production schedule is vital to your growth as a publisher. When you're finished with this article your assignment is going to be to go and check out a big newsstand. Here's what you'll see: racks bursting at the seams with titles. Racks that are way too crowded for their stock. If you're not consistent with the timing of your new issues you'll just lose your space on that rack when a new issue of something else comes in. 70% of a magazine's sales come in the first two weeks after it hits the newsstands. The newsstand managers know this and they live by it. After a couple of weeks your prime display is gone, and if you don't get removed from the rack entirely at this point, you'll at least be sent to the back part of the display.

Consistency doesn't just mean a regular print schedule. It also means that your zine always stands out from the others. Huh? Consistency begins and ends with your cover. Remember how crowded that rack is? The titles with the best covers tend to get better display. Even if your zine is all newsprint on the inside pop for a glossy stock cover. It looks better to the eye and once Joe Consumer picks your zine up, the scintillating content will stand up by itself. ☺

sitting around for months and months (years anyone?) assembling another issue. Sure, it may sound like a good idea, but by the time you get the next issue out, you've lost almost all the steam you had from your first issue. Do as

Yes, your best chance of picking up distribution is to have a couple of issues under your belt. Sure, it means that you've got extra issues of the first few issues of your magazine (we've probably got close to a thousand copies of Punk Planet #1 sitting around in a recycling center somewhere), but you'll see things pick up after a few issues. As much as we'd all like to think that quality is job one, for distributors consistency makes the world go 'round. ⑤

When you really think about it, putting out a consistent zine is really IS more important than putting out an incredible issue and then

good a job as you can, but get it out in a timely manner god-damnit. The more you do it, the better you get at it, and the better your zine gets. Like they say, practice makes perfect.

First Contact Part Two: The Follow-up Call

Wait at least two weeks before you pick up that phone! Sure, you want to find out if they've seen your zine. Sure, it's the greatest thing since SHAKE (yeah, right).

Sure, the distro's buyer should have run to the mailbox every day just on the off chance that you WOULD send one to her. But remember that big stack of magazines I was telling you about? Your magazine is sandwiched somewhere at the bottom between yet another leather fetish glossy and a mountain biking rag. Give the damn buyer a chance to dig your diamond out of that shit pile. Two weeks may be enough time, but don't be surprised if an exasperated buyer

apologizes and says that she hasn't had a chance to take a look at it. Even though you won't be blacklisted for calling too early, you may want to wait about two more weeks before calling again. Actually, wait three.

④ It's fine to call the buyer on the phone, but don't make a pest of yourself. Always be polite with the buyer, they have all of the power in this situation. If they reject you don't get mad, but do ask them why. Most of the time you'll receive an honest answer: "The world needs another indy music magazine like it needs a hole in the ozone." "The content was great, but have you heard of a word processor or saddle-stitching".

Unless the buyer has their head stuck completely up their ass they'll encourage you to keep sending the new issues to them. I've picked up many titles on the second, third or even fourth pass through.

Insulting a buyer will get you nowhere. The amount of people in the magazine industry is incredibly small, and we all move from company to company. And guess what? We remember the folks who caused us trouble just as much as we remember the nice publishers.

Be courteous, accept the buyer's constructive criticism and keep plugging away. ☺

and the distributor, each of which has their own concerns. More on dialog later.

Once you're in the system, there are ways to keep from being gobbled up. Don't rely on the distributor to let you know what these ways are. This is not from lack of con-

cern on the distributor's part or because distributors are somehow evil incarnate. The distributor gets the smallest piece of the pie. In order to survive on the small margin they get, they have to push volume through their warehouses and, especially true of

the smaller distributors who are flexible enough to agree to distribute zines, are usually understaffed, and what little staff there is, is underpaid and extremely harried. What this means is you'll have to come down from the ivory tower of the embattled artist

and roll in the muck of business a bit by following up on payments and sales. Here's how you do it:

First, get a calendar. According to the terms you worked out with your distributor make a note in your calen-

Have faith, grasshopper, eventually she will look at your zine. Of course, she probably won't remember it when you call her. Don't be surprised if you find yourself having to describe the cover, the contents, everything about the zine to jog the buyer's memory. It's not that they didn't like it, it's just that they saw about 5000 other zines on the same day (the funniest response I've ever gotten was after describing everything, the title, the cover, what was on almost every page, and had virtually given up, the buyer said "oh, yeah, the one with the page numbers... I'll take 200.").

Even after all you've gone through, there's a very good chance that the buyer is going to tell you that while she liked your zine, she just can't carry it right now. Yes, it's a brush off, but it doesn't mean the end of the world. Keep sending her your latest issues of your zine. Don't call after every one, but be sure to keep in touch. Remember what I said about consistency? After seeing a few more issues coming out on a regular basis, and hopefully getting better, she may very well pick the zine up! ①

So You've Been Picked Up...

Once you've been picked up, a distributor may do one of two things. They may just outright ask for a bunch of magazines (don't be surprised if they order a really small number like 25 to start, if your magazine is any good, it'll go up), or they may mail you a contract first.

"Wait... what's this about a contract???"

Don't get your knickers in a twist, big guy. Yes, some distributors, especially distributors that specialize in magazines (as opposed to music distributors that carry zines too) will send you a contract. It's not that big a deal.

A standard distribution contract deals with a number of points. Here's the main ones, and what they mean to you:

1) Payment. Many distributors will want to negotiate terms with you that are different from your regular consignment rates. It's up to you to decide whether it's worth it. The contract they send you will have prices and some sort of

payment times on them. Remember, it's a contract, so you can change anything you want on it! Of course, they have to agree to your changes, but if they're reasonable and you are too, you can probably agree on something.

The average distribution payment is 55% off the cover price and payment 60 days after receipt of next issue. Through negotiations, I've gotten some distributors to go up to 50%, but it took a lot of work. However, that 60 days thing is almost impossible to move up. ⑤ If a distributor does agree to it, they're probably lying to you (yes, they do that. A lot. A whole lot.).

Whoa, that's a bunch of numbers, what does it all mean? It means that if you're magazine costs \$2.00 at shows or in a store (that's your cover price, whether it's really on your cover or not (it should be!)) at 50% off you're cover price it's going to cost \$1.00 to distributors. 55% would mean 90¢ per issue.

Why do distributors take such a big cut? Because the distributor has to turn around and sell it back to a store (or sometimes even another distributor) at a price that is going to make the store a bit of a profit, while still making the distributor a little profit too.

So when do you get that payment? As much as you'd like to get paid immediately, you have to wait for your next issue to come out, PLUS an additional 60 days before you can

⑤ *Never sign a 60% off contract with an individual distributor (if you have a National Distributor, one that handles all of your distributors for you, then you'll sign a 60% off contract). Individual distributors are entitled to 55% off, or the equivalent. The larger ones will ask for 50% off and a reship allowance. You may be able to haggle on the amount of the allowance, but they'll get it, and it's on every copy they ship for you, not just the ones that sell. Again, this is a grim reality of playing in the big leagues. Accept it and be nitpicky with details.*

The payment terms are all tied into cashflow. The distributors are juggling their money as best they can. Anybody at the National level who says that they'll pay you faster than net 60 days after offsale is lying to you. Don't go for it. ©

dar on the days you're supposed to be paid. If you don't get a check within a week of that date, give the distributor a call (and another call and another call until you get the check). Do this for every issue you ship. Note carefully: distributor payments are triggered

by their receipt of subsequent issues. If you put your distributor on hold because of slow payments, you need to let them know, otherwise your payment may never come up on their computer.

Ask your distributor for a distribution list. This will show

you where your magazine is going and will come in handy if people ask where to find your magazine and will also give a clue as to whether or not your title has been adequately promoted by the distributor. If you don't feel that it has, call your distributor and

find out what promotions they do and ask if you can be a part of it. For example, most distributors will routinely mail out publisher-supplied flyers to their retail accounts to promote a title.

Once you've shipped your third issue to a distributor, ask

start bitching to get paid. Why is that? It's because most stores don't process returns until they receive the next issue of a given zine. It takes everyone a while to process those returns, and then it takes your distributor a while to process the processed returns. The whole return dance is going to take at least 60 days after your next issue. But I'm getting a little ahead of myself.

2) Returns. Most big distributors won't return full copies of your magazine. Some will let you ask, but there's a good chance the stores they're selling to won't do it. Your best bet is to ask for covers back, that way you can count 'em up & hold them in your hands, and know that the amount they returned to you is the amount they're really deducting. Plus, you don't get stuck with ratty old back issues. However, the really big distributors will only agree to "affidavit returns" what this means is that the distributor sends you sheet after sheet of lists of returns from your zine. Yes, it's a pretty shady thing, and I don't like it at all, but it's the ropes kid. ⑥

⑥ OK, secret revealing time. Here are the reasons why distributors have affidavit returns: The chains have central returns centers. In other words, all of the Barnes & Noble and Borders stores send their returns to one place for processing!!! Each week the returns center then sends a returns report to the distributor. The independent stores do send the covers back to the distributors themselves. Also, it's cheaper and more efficient to send back a piece of paper with the returns on it then it is to send back the covers. Even if you offer to pay the shipping for the covers it's not worth it. Sad but true. ⑥

One word about affidavit returns. You're going to be getting little slips of paper from your distributor every few weeks with returns listed on them. READ AND SAVE THOSE SHEETS. There have been times where I've caught mistakes on the return sheet. You can call your rep at the distributor and tell them that there was a screw up (whether it really was a screw up or an attempt to screw you is up for grabs), and

they'll adjust your account accordingly. If you don't check 'em and call them on it, it's your loss.

The thing to remember about returns, and it sounds pretty stupid but I'm going to say it anyway, YOU DON'T GET PAID FOR RETURNED COPIES!! If a distributor wants 1000 copies of your magazine, don't go out & score the cocaine and blow jobs yet. The zine may only have a sellthrough (distributor jargon for how many magazines actually sold) of 40%, which means that you only get paid for 400 magazines (more about ACTUALLY getting paid for those magazines later). Surprising as it may sound, a good sellthrough percentage is only about 60-70%. Expect to sell about that many through distributors, and have the rest counted as returns.

3) Bar-codes.

Most larger distributors need a bar-code on your zine in order to get their computers to work right, and to cater to stores that have bar-code scanners. The distributor is going to fight you tooth & nail to get you to put a bar-code on your zine. If you want one, then you've got no problems. Your distributor is going to do all the legwork for you and can probably score you a pretty good deal on a bar-code. Yes, as strange as it may sound, you have to BUY a bar-code. They cost a few

⑦ A barcode is a necessary evil these days. Face the music. All of the returns are done by scanners. You don't have to have a barcode to start publishing your zine, or even to start distributing it. When you need a barcode your distributor will let you know. Ask them to get one for you, the larger distributors buy them in bulk and then pass the savings right on through to the publisher.

It's definitely cheaper to have a bar-code printed on the magazine then it is to pay for stickers. Remember that newsstand trip? Certain large distributors seem to have trouble placing bar-code stickers in the same place on each copy. Now, that's ugly!!!

Get the barcode and then at least you can place it wherever you want on the front cover. Never, and I mean never, put it on the back cover. Remember, all of the returns are done with front covers, a barcode on the back is the same as not having one at all. ⑥

your distributor to do a sell-through report. This will show the distributor who's selling and who's not. If your sales have fallen below 50% of the amount you shipped, you may ask your distributor to put your account on manual order adjustment meaning that they

will adjust the orders the retailers have given for your title to a number which more closely resembles actual sales. Don't be premature with this request. Distributors will have no idea of sales for a particular issue until at least a month or two after they have

shipped out the next issue.

Being in the middle is not an easy place to be. Distribution is a balancing act between the expectations of publishers and the needs of newsstands. Yet it is this middle path a distributor must tread if they are to do the job

well. Unfortunately, most publishers don't understand that the distributor is performing this balancing act every minute of every day amid the clamor of getting the magazines out of the warehouse. From where I sit (my desk looks out over our ware-

8 All of my writing has been assuming that you're going to go with the chain distribution. Kudos to **Aaron Cometbus** for not doing it. But if you are interested in the chain distribution the larger distributors will fight over the same chains for the most part. If you're not interested in chain distribution then the odds of a major distributor being interested in you aren't too high.

Here is where you have the power over the distributor. And here is where you have to give exclusives. Barnes & Noble will only accept **Bust** from one distributor. Those chain rights are the prize that the major distributors crave. Play the distributors off of one another if they want chains. You may be able to lower those reship charges or even get a partial early payment in exchange for those rights.

You can split the chain rights up. In other words give Borders & Crown Books to one distributor, Barnes & Noble to another, etc.

Once you sign these rights away, you can still change them. If you're unhappy with the service you receive you can switch over the chain distribution. Your new distributor will give you instructions and perhaps even the text to a letter that you'll have to write.

An added word about the chains, be very careful with them. They tend to over order on the 'zines and then just return the unsolds at no cost to them.

hundred bucks to get, but it's yours forever. If you don't want to have a bar-code printed on your zine (lets face it, they're ugly), the distributor is going to charge you for putting a bar-code sticker on your zine. They charge somewhere between ten and twenty-five cents EACH MAGAZINE for this service. Do the math on that. It means that pretty quickly it's actually cheaper to buy the bar-code and be done with it. It sucks, but again, you wanted the distro and you don't want the bar-code on your zine, so you pay the price. 7

4) Distribution Rights: This is a section where the distributor explains where they

will distribute your magazine, while all distributor sell to a ton of independent stores, this section of your contract mostly deals with what chain stores your zine would go to. Make sure that nowhere on your contract it says anything about an exclusive distribution deal!! Exclusives fuck you up. The distributor has all the power and you have none. Not many distributors have exclusive rights anywhere. Stay away from

those that do.

Remember, if you don't want your zine going into chains, they don't have to. If your contract says anything about going into chain stores, you can cross that section right out. The distributor will probably groan a little, but respect your wishes. 8

5) Other Charges:

Some distributors will charge you for other things. The biggest rip-off a distributor can try to pull over on you is something called "re-shipping". What that means is that the distributor charges you to ship your magazine to the stores they distribute to. It's a totally fucked up charge (they charge you to ship them, even if the store doesn't sell any), and I'd recommend negotiating it out of your contract, or not going with a distributor that tries to charge you for re-shipping. 9

The most important thing to remember about your contract is that it is just that, a contract. The Webster's Dictionary

D

9 The re-ship allowance can work for you. It certainly doesn't for **Punk Planet**. Given the hefty weight of each copy and the low cover price of said copy it can't. However, if you're of average price (\$3.95) and of average weight (around a third of a pound) a reship allowance shouldn't cost you more than about 12 cents a copy (about 3% of the cover price).

Here's where the previously mentioned diligence comes in. You can make the reship allowance work in your favor. After three issues of your 'zine have hit the stands there will be enough data for sales reports.

Ask your distributors for them and put on that green visor. Check to see how many copies of your 'zine each store is getting, if a store isn't performing at about 60% sellthru then adjust it up or down. If Barnes & Noble #5555 is getting 8 copies of each issue of **Motorbooty** and selling 3, then knock their order down to 5 copies. If they get 8 and sell out everytime, then increase their order to 10 copies. Don't believe that the distributor's computer will do this, it won't. To be efficient you must ask for manual order regulation, and if your account executive isn't doing it for you, submit the list of order changes to them!!!

Cross check those distribution reports, are stores ordering your title from more than one distributor ➡

house), I know how hard we work to do what we do. I don't expect publishers to know this, but I do expect them to listen. The distribution system is indeed flawed. Yet as flawed as it is, it is the system we have for getting magazines into as many people's hands as

possible. I believe that the only hope for negotiating through this web with some success is dialog: you tell me your concerns, I tell you mine, and hopefully we discover together a common ground from which to begin. Once begun, the dialog must con-

tinue. New problems will always arise. That's simply the nature of the beast. I believe that this dialog is essential if integrity is to become a part of the system.

Unfortunately dialog will sometimes completely break down, in which case it's time

to terminate the relationship. Personally, though, I do not think that those hopeless cases should mean we don't bother with attempting dialog if we can. To find out that a problem exists third-hand, through a nasty article in a zine or via a zines newsgroup,

that I keep next to my desk defines a contract as "An agreement between two or more people to do something, esp. one formally set forth in writing and enforceable by law." A contract is an AGREEMENT. That means that if there's anything you object to in your contract (be it payment terms, chain stores, or whatever...), you have the right to negotiate

something that both you and your distributor agree to. I've managed to lower percentages, restrict places where Punk Planet can go to, and even enact a late-payment fine by negotiating contracts with distributors. Another important part in that definition of a contract is that it's enforceable by law. That means that if your distributor doesn't pay you when

they say they're going to, in theory you could sue them for breach of contract. Most of the time that's not going to be feasible, but you can always throw that weight around if things get really awful (I never have). However, that's a two way street; if you break some part of the contract, your distributor could have you by the balls.

Your New Life With Your Distributor

So you got the call, you signed the contract, you sent the issues, everything's coolio now, right?

Wrong. Now is the time that your real relationship with your distributor starts.

The relationship you have with your distributor can spell

success or failure for your zine at that distro company. If you get along well with your representative at the distributor, they're going to really push your magazine to their stores and make sure that things are going smoothly for you as far as payment goes. And yes, exactly the opposite happens when you don't get along with your rep.

Keep in touch with your rep. Don't bug them every day, but don't just call to get the next issue's order. Let them know what's happening with your zine, what people are saying about it, what's going to be in upcoming issues. Ask them for their opinion on things. Most reps won't read your zine, but if they think that you're going to ask them about it, they'll start reading it, which will help them sell it to stores too!

I can't stress enough how important it is to have a rep on your side. Having a rep that doesn't like you or your zine makes everything a nightmare. Punk Planet has had such a bad relationship with one of our distributors (we've recently dropped them HAW HAW!) that the last time I checked their on-line catalog, we weren't even in it! Trying to deal with difficult distributors totally saps your energy. You have to call them all the time, you have to fax them mean letters, you have to be the consummate advocate for your zine.

However, even the best rep can't be on constant watch for your zine and what's best for it, so it's up to you to ask the right questions. Any distributor can supply you with a list of what stores your zine is going to, how many they're taking, and how many they're returning. In a perfect world, your rep would be watching this and adjusting their order accordingly. It ain't a perfect world, it's best if you keep an eye on your list, and if you see a store that is always selling out of your zine or another one that is only selling two copies, to let your rep know to adjust those stores accordingly.

Sometimes you can have a great relationship with your rep., but then they leave the company and you find that you don't get along so well with the new person. That's exactly what's happened with Punk Planet at a couple of different distributors. When we first signed on with them, I got along

and returning too many copies as a result? Don't let this happen to you. Just eliminate a store from a distributors list if they're consistently prematurely returning your 'zine.

Ask your distributor about promotional programs that they offer. Send sample copies or flyers to retailers through your distributor, if stores don't know about your 'zine they won't order it.

National newsstand distribution is a tough task, too make money at it it's even more difficult. With the right amount of work it can work out, just be willing to work or willing to farm out the work, and most of all, be careful. ©

is not much of an incentive to communication, being as it is a one-sided bitch without much constructive use. Easy to be a sonofabitch when protected from response. Dialog is lost. Email replaces discourse. Our ability to affect change is diminished.

Perhaps naively I feel that the written word has the power for change and that the zine explosion is essential to feed a hunger for stories other than the ones we are forced by corporate media. (I actually don't watch television or read newspapers anymore.

Instead I read through huge stacks of zines and small press and feel my world is better reflected.) What is needed is a re-visioning of the written word and how best to disseminate that new vision, without hampering that dissemination by misguided correct politics.

Don't waste your time doing another music magazine with cute personal stories. Be courageous enough to develop your own voice.

The corporate media has powerful distribution engines in place for propagating its message. If it is possible to

swimmingly with the rep. Thusly, we got paid more or less on time, the zines sold a phenomenal amount, their orders kept going up, and everyone was happy. Then the reps quit and our orders have either been stagnant, never increasing past the point that the good rep got them to or, even worse, going down. That's a bad situation to get caught up in and once you're in it, there's very little you can do about it. The best move you can make to get in better with the new rep is to try and start over. Apologize for starting out on the wrong foot, and re-introduce yourself and your zine. Remember, the rep may have never seen your zine, since he started after you had already been picked up. Offer to send him some back-issues so he can get a feel for your zine. You may feel like a dork doing it, but remember what I said about being in good with your distributor. Not only does it make things go more smoothly in general, it is also your biggest asset in the ultimate distribution mess: getting paid.

Getting Paid

Getting all this great distribution has made your little zine go from being distributed in your town to being distributed all over the globe, that's great, but it also means that your printing costs as well as your shipping costs, have gone up. You've got bills to pay, and you need to get paid to pay 'em.

In a perfect world, your distributor would pay you 60 days after the receipt of your next issue, just like they said they would in their contract. Once again (say it with me now) IT AIN'T A PERFECT WORLD! Getting paid by your distributor is the most time consuming, annoying son-of-a-bitch you will ever know.

Good distributor or bad distributor, there isn't a single one that I've ever come across that pays on time. Some distributors pay consistently, but late. Other distributors barely pay you at all.

That said, it's up to you to be eternally vigilant in order to get paid. Keep track of when you shipped your zines to the distributor. If you shipped via UPS, get the tracking number

and call to find out when the distributor received it. Once you know, run to your calendar and mark down 60 days later (if that's the payment terms your contract specified, if it isn't mark down the number of days that it DID specify). Once that date comes up, call up the distributor and let them know that they should be issuing you a check soon. If you don't get your check in a week or so, call them again. Keep calling them until you get your check. Find out who your accounts payable person is (that's the person at the distributor that's in charge of cutting your check). Start calling and asking for them if you're calling about getting paid, instead of going through your rep.

Getting paid is the one situation where the squeaky wheel really does get the grease. If you hound them for your payment, you'll eventually get it. If you don't, you won't. I'm serious. I had one distributor not pay Punk Planet for an entire year just because I didn't call them up and demand payment. Silly me, I expected them to adhere to their contract. I learned from that. You've got to keep on your distributors if you want to get paid. End of story.

If things get really out of hand remember that you signed a contract. If your distributor doesn't pay you according to the terms that both of you agreed to, you have the law on your side. Unless you're a lawyer or you're friends with one of have one in your family, you're probably not going to be able to afford going the legal route, but your distributor doesn't have to know that. See if they'll call your bluff; they know they're breaking the law, they're just banking on the fact that you don't. Now you do.

Perhaps the most important element to getting your zine distributed is keeping your eyes, ears and mind open. No distributor is perfect and no distributor is going to do everything you need them to do. It's up to you to make sure that they do the best job possible for you. Good luck! ☺

Daniel Sinker is the big cheese at Punk Planet and couldn't be happier that he never has to deal with distribution ever again.

Dok Kaper lives for 'zines, he eats them for breakfast, lunch & dinner and observes them from an insiders point of view. Due to his need for anonymity, he can be reached through Punk Planet's address.

counter the corporate media's investment in keeping us paranoid through nightly visions of terror and violence brought to us courtesy of the local news, then we must take advantage of the possibility however it presents itself, including working within the system and

attempting to resolve apparent conflicts through dialog. ☺

David Hirschi is buyer for Desert Moon Periodicals, 1226A Calle de Comercio, Santa Fe, NM 87505, xines@xines.com

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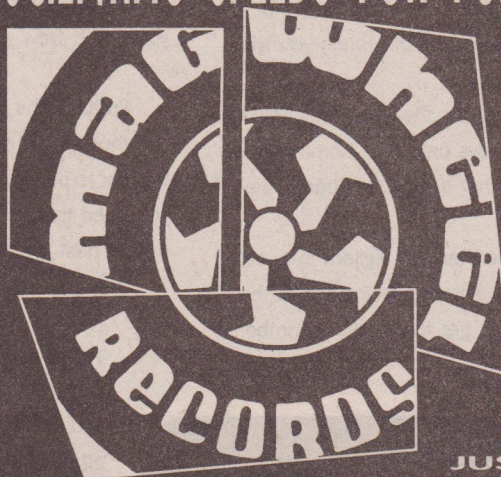
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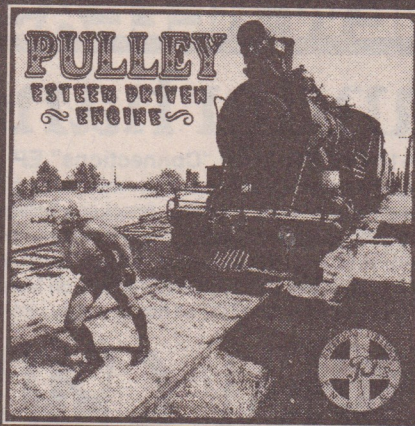
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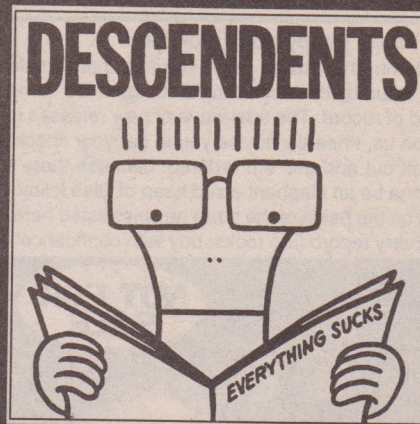
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sHEAVY, TRICKY WOO etc. Buy direct or send now for our glorious full B&W catalogue.

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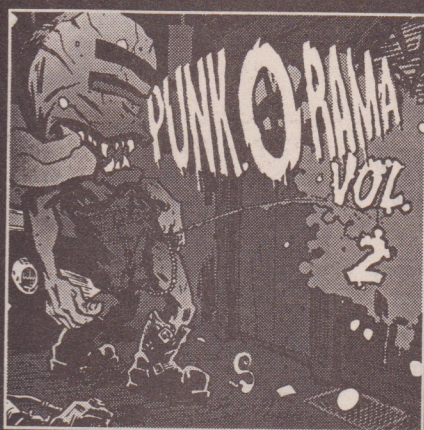
Drink the Kool Aid...



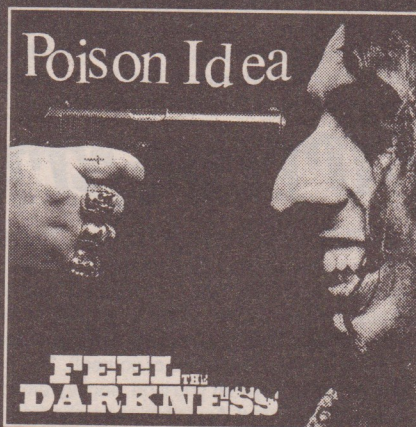
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Esteem Driven Engine 7001, 7002



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Everything Sucks 8101, 8102



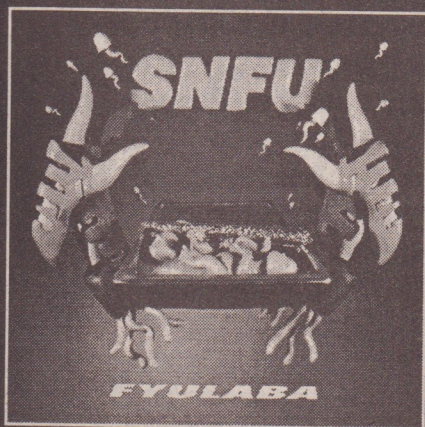
Punk-O-Rama
Volume 2 8401, 8402



Poison Idea
Feel The Darkness 6301, 6302



T.S.O.L.
Dance With Me 6201, 6202




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FILE UNDER MUTANT POP

Hi again, poppy punk rock fans!

Damn, this makes twice in a row that I made the issue by the skin of my teeth, gotta be some kind of record. The tidal wave of new releases is upon us, I heartily advise you to get your check-book out and get 'em ordered, because there's gonna be an elephant-sized heap of titles following on the heels of the three newbies listed here.

Every record I do rocks, buy with confidence!

NOT FOR SALE



Young lovers everywhere are grooving to the swinging sounds of THE AUTOMATICS. Their new record, "Makin' Out," has started a stampede of touchie-feelie-huggie-kissie type behavior, as exemplified by the handsome couple above. But face it, if you don't own the self-titled debut CD by THE AUTOMATICS (\$10.00 POSTPAID), wull, you just aren't quite with the program yet. Take immediate action to rectify this deficiency, bro!



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Forthcoming titles includes EPs by THE CONNIE DUNGS, AFTER SCHOOL SPECIAL, SICKO, THE MUTE ANTS, and THE AUTOMATICS. (Yes, them again!) Plus there's a full length CD from AFTER SCHOOL SPECIAL in the works. Buy a CD and a few records and I'll put ya on the Mutant Pop mailing list. I've got a great catalog that comes out every 4-6 weeks and features about 200 cool 7" records each at the incredible price of \$3.00 ppd. Plus I have imports from the coolest label in England, CRACKLE RECORDS.

If you wanna use email, drop me a line at MutantPop@aol.com if you have any questions. Also be sure to read MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL and RATIONAL INQUIRER regularly, they're great publications.

Thank you very much for your continued support of Mutant Pop Records! —T. Chandler

NEW RELEASES

underhand **\$3**

MP-14 UNDERHAND "Connections" EP

Larry Livermore's greatest blunder was passing up on this phenomenal Eureka, CA band. Absolutely brilliant songwriting—powerful, catchy, and melodic with extremely smart lyrics. Four tracks here and they absolutely rip. Check out the other two UNDERHAND records on Mutant Pop while you're at it! First 500 on lux blue-grey vinyl! **\$3.00.**

MORAL CRUX **\$3**

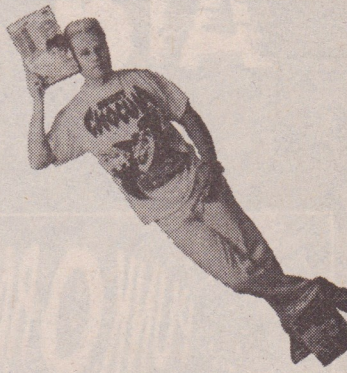
MP-12 MORAL CRUX "Victim of Hype" EP

If you think this band is boring and tuneless, you are tripping. James X. and MORAL CRUX turn out killer tuneage that will keep you hopping with lyrics that will keep you thinking. This is far and away their best record to date, top-flight production of absolutely infectious songs. First 500 on rad salmon-orange opaque vinyl. Buy now or whine later... **\$3.00.**

AUTOMATICS

MP-17 THE AUTOMATICS "Makin' Out" EP

You don't even own the god-damned album yet and already the amazing AUTOMATICS are out of the studio with four more buzzsaw blasts that promise to lobotomize your brain. This time they're doing poppy love songs (in their inimitable minimalistic three chord style, of course!). Big, big harmonies and songs so catchy that you'll be singing 'em in the shower three weeks from now. A can't miss combo from one of the hottest bands in the punk rock world. There are two other EPs on Mutant Pop also available, snarf those as well and start a collection. First 500 on classic red wax. Remember: **MAKIN' OUT IS LOTS OF FUN!!!** **\$3.00.**



MP-01 UNDERHAND "Desire" is a classic, now in a totally new sleeve. **\$3**

MP-02 ROUND NINE self-titled EP sounds like Fifteen or Crimpshrine.

MP-03 BORIS THE SPRINKLER is temporarily out of print—sorry!

MP-04 STINK "I Don't Want Anything You've Got" really rips.

MP-05 THE AUTOMATICS "All the Kids..." is the lo-fi demophonic debut.

MP-06 EVERREADY "County Transit System" is a great piece of power.

MP-07 UNDERHAND "Under a Glass" features Arne's best songwriting.

MP-08 THE CONNIE DUNGS "I Hate This Town!" is killer snot-pop. **\$3**

MP-09 SCRATCH BONGOWAX "Dogpile on Liz" is fucking hilarious!

MP-10 JON COUGAR CON. CAMP "Victoria's Secret Sauce" is their best.

MP-11 BUGLITE "Sorry to Disappoint You" is warm and wonderful.

MP-12 MORAL CRUX "Victim of Hype" is catchy and thought-provoking.

MP-13 THE AUTOMATICS "10 Golden Greats!" has TEN songs!!!

MP-14 UNDERHAND "Connections" is the third amazing brick in the wall.

MP-17 THE AUTOMATICS "Makin' Out" features 4 poppy punk classics. **\$3**

MP-701 EVERREADY "Kalifornia" reissue is Brian's best piece of work.

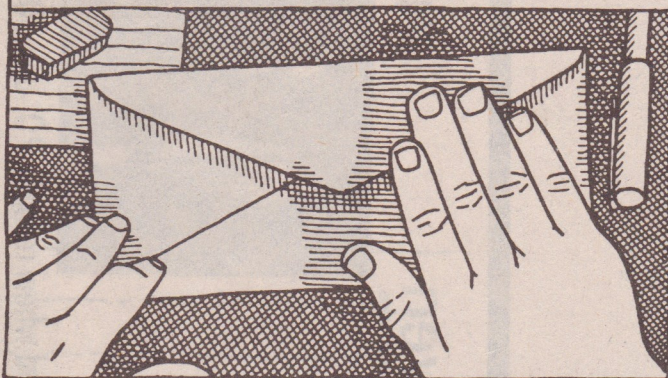
MP-702 JCCC "Punk Explosion" is Chris's all-time favorite. Conrad's too!

MP-703 THE PULLOUTS "A Lot of Power Tool..." is terrific fast poppy stuff.

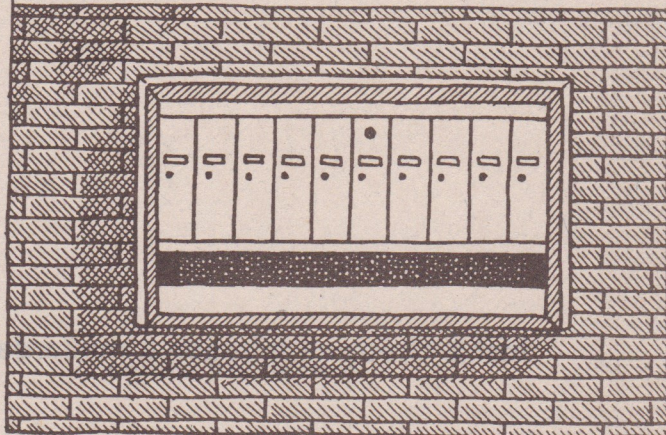
MUTANT POP RECORDS
5010 NW SHASTA * CORVALLIS, OR 97330

DO YOU REMEMBER?

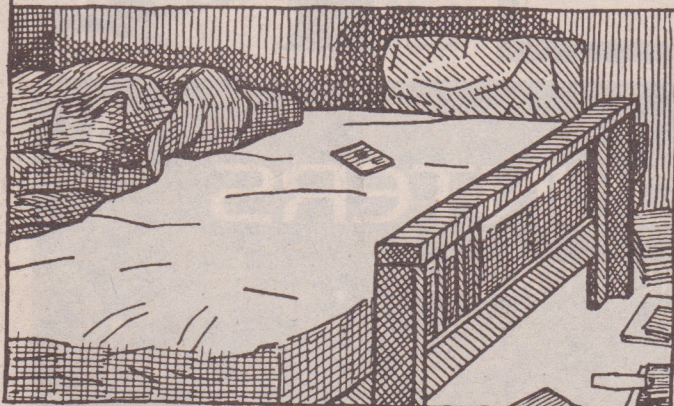
A FEW YEARS AGO I ORDERED YOUR ZINE- EVEN THOUGH IT DIDN'T GET A VERY GOOD REVIEW. I GUESS THE THINGS THAT THE REVIEWER SAID WERE BAD ACTUALLY SOUNDED GOOD TO ME.



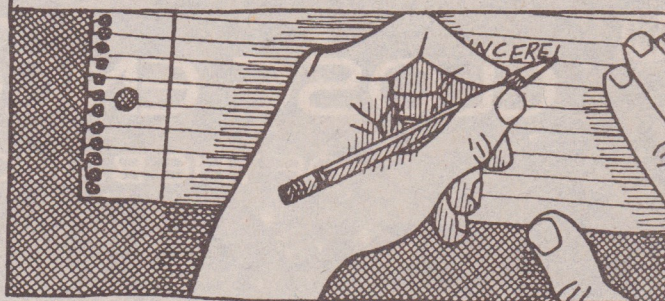
A FEW WEEKS AFTER I SENT YOU MY DOLLAR YOUR ZINE SHOWED UP IN MY MAILBOX.



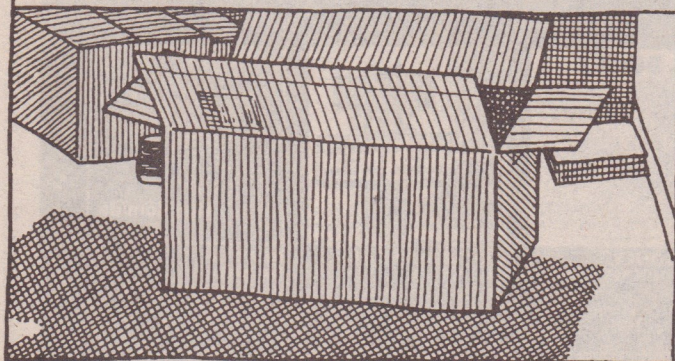
I READ IT AS I RODE BUSES THROUGH THE CITY, WHEN I ATE LUNCH AT THE YELLOW SUBMARINE, AND LATER SITTING IN MY BED BEFORE I WENT TO SLEEP.



IT WAS A GREAT ZINE, AND AFTER I FINISHED READING IT I ACTUALLY WROTE YOU A LETTER ABOUT HOW MUCH I LIKED IT, WHY, AND WOULD YOU PLEASE SEND ME THE NEXT ONE. BUT YOU NEVER WROTE BACK AND I NEVER SAW ANOTHER REVIEW OF ANYTHING YOU'VE DONE.



ANYWAY, TODAY I WAS UNPACKING A BUNCH OF MY STUFF (FROM MOVING ACROSS THE COUNTRY) AND I CAME ACROSS YOUR LITTLE MAGAZINE AGAIN, AND IT GOT ME TO WONDERING ABOUT WHATEVER HAPPENED TO YOU...



... WAS PUNK JUST A PHASE FOR YOU AFTER ALL, AND NOW YOU'VE MOVED ON TO SOMETHING ELSE? DO YOU FEEL BETTER ABOUT LIFE? ARE YOU FINALLY HAPPY? I GUESS I'LL NEVER KNOW HOW YOU TURNED OUT, BUT THANKS AGAIN FOR THE ZINE.



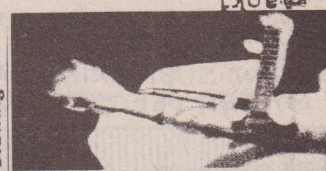
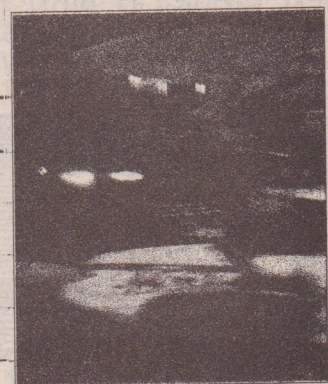
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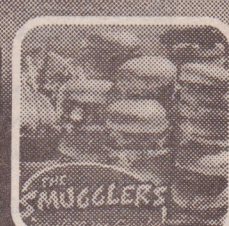
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Record Reviews

10-96 - No Retreat

Imagine Dirty Rotten LP era DRI fighting the Exploited with Jello Biafra as the referee and this is what you get... some songs are really fast and others kinda chug along. 10-96 do tons of covers on this record, including Riot Squad (Toxic Reasons), Dogs of War (the Exploited), White Minority (Black Flag). They also cover a Skrewdriver song which bothers me... (MM)

Beer City Records PO Box 26035 Milwaukee WI 53226-0035

The 90 day Men-taking apart the vessel, 7"

I really want to give this a good review. They hand-made all the covers and they look great. The problem is that the music is kinda slow and boring indie rockish/light emo that lasts way too long. Sorry guys, but that's how it goes. (WD)

11 E. Elm; Apt 2W; Chicago, IL 60611

Abby Normal-Peace, Love, and @#\$\$ You!, Tape

Generic, boring, and god damn they just suck. They do some bad bad shit. I wish this was a joke. (WD)

James Akana; 1355 Koko Head Ave.; Honolulu, HI 96816

Absolute Zero-s/t, 7"

This works. It's fast and raw ala Propagandhi, but with the rawness is more akin to Spitboy. The lyrics are thought provoking and somewhat political. "The End" really hit home with me, as did "On Me". Definitely get this 7" if you like your records hard and intelligent. It's a rare combo and Absolute Zero does it well. (JP)

Allied PO Box 460683 SF, CA 94146

Against All Authority-7/16/95, 7"

Ah, another VMLive record, god help us. More terrible sound from a label practically based on the idea. I mean, it's a nice idea for the record to sound like a show, but this is not reflective of the audiences experiences like they want. But that's enough about that, A.A.A. is a kinda hardcore ska band that is pretty boring. The only neat thing they do is have horns, and that's not neat anymore. Pass in a big bad way. (WD)

You get it from Lookout.

Ahera-Essence of Life LP

From the cover art & title of the album, I was expecting this to be a bad metal CD. Instead, it was a bad bar-rock CD. Next. (DS)

Herbino PO Box 8097 Cambridge MA 02139-8097

Allegiance to None/Masturbation-split 7"

Allegiance to None are a typical hardcore punk band with a little sludge thrown in. Nothing special. Masturbation are a '77 band that might be ok, but I can't tell because half the time there's a whiney/utterly horrible/Jan Brady sound-a-like girl singing. God save us all... (WD)

Laic Off Records; PO Box 82624; Portland, OR 97282

Arm, LP

I don't really know how to describe this band. They're kind of like a noisy Jawbreaker I guess, but the problem with that description is that it would leave me to believe that I like them and I don't. When listening to their record for some reason it seems like there or hundreds of bands like this out there and you've heard it all before. A valiant effort, but just nothing new. (WD)

PO Box 27293; Mpls, MN 55427

The Automatic Few/Today is the Day-split 7"

This is a split 7" available only through Change Zine #8. Both sides feature hilariously pretentious interviews with the bands (I'm pretty sure they're joking). Today is the Day is pretty annoying metal "Kill Yourself Please" indeed. The Automatic Few is Change Zine roving reporter Johnny T's band. The Automatic Few can definitely hold their own, playing a pretty standard emo rock. I'd like to hear more from these guys and less from Today is the Day. (DS)

Change Zine 9 Birchwood Lane Westport CT 06880

The Automatics-s/t, CD

This is a really fun CD- lots of pop spirit. I like this. I like this a lot. I'm gonna listen to it again and again and again. Stylistically, this falls somewhere between Boris The Sprinkler and The Queens, with whimsical lyrics and fun fast beats. This is the pop punk band of the year! You can't go wrong with songs about prom queens, fish, college radio, and TV, can you? I mean it, get this. I'd pay my own money for this! Yippie! Viva La Mutant Pop! (JP)

Mutant Pop 5010 NW Shasta Corvallis, OR 97330

Beat Minus Mechanic, 7"

Um...so they have a song called stay true and are distributed by revelation. That gave me some expectations. The cover was very artsy and emo looking though, so that was another idea. However, neither

were right at all! A pretty but somehow extremely annoying female singer over what sounds like it could be kinda cool poppy hardcore, but is somehow turned to drivel by the vocals that drown it out. (What a crazy (and bad) record! (WD)

Crisis POB 5232; Huntington Beach, CA 92615

Beatnik Termites-Strawberry Girl, 7"

Wow, much better than their split with the parasites that I found overly snotty and annoying. This is nice and sweet and happy pop-punk, in fact very much like the Parasites themselves. This is quite enjoyable, I know I'm dancin'! (WD)

Recess Records!

The Beautys - Girl from Planet Fuck, 7"

Real rock and roll with a pop edge to it. Kinda Gr'ups like and at the same time would fit on an Estrus record as well. They have a female vocalist with a great voice and they are from Indiana, what else do you need to know? (EA)

PO Box 10037 Fort Wayne, IN 46850

Bert-Quiet Positive Pump, CD

I've seen these guys a couple times live and tried to explain to people why they're really bad, but never really succeeded. Now I try for you. The bass is real slappy and annoying and the vocals are screamed and really suck. The songs are empty and hollow of any worth. Shit. (WD)

Chicken Ranch; POB 1157; Ruston, LA 73273

Betty's love child - angelfish, CD

For people who like punk. or something... (MD)

17th St. Records; 797 E. St. John St., San Jose, CA 95112

Big Blonde Wig-7"

Is there such an thing as indie hard rock? Well, I guess there is Bush. BBW sounds kinda like the stuff you'd hear in a dingy bar at midnight on a Monday in the scariest part of town imaginable. Slow and uninteresting. (BVH)

1921 W. Leland #2E Chicago, IL 60640

Blitz- Voice of a Generation, CD

I've never been one for the whole retro "oi/ska" scene. Most people seem to be into it mostly for the fashion, (Doc Martens, bomber jackets, buttons, etc.) and I am far from a fashion plate. I almost thanked my parents for sending me to Catholic school so I didn't have to worry about anything aside from tying my shoes! One thing I do know is good music, and Blitz aren't streetpunk legends for nothing. These guys were a punk jug-



Matt Miller (MM), Greg Gartland (GG), Darren Cahr (DC), Bret Van Horn (BVH), Joan Pixie (JP), Marie Davenport (MD), Bob Conrad (bobe), Kim Bae (KB), Will Dandy (WD), Mike Gellar (MG), Eric Action (EA), Daniel Sinker (DS)

gernaut and still can bowl me over today. I grant exceptions for my own personal rules, and as far as British Oi goes, its Blitz. These guys rock. (GG)
Dojo; FDR Station PO Box 684 New York, NY 10150

Blood Filloas - Toys are Us, 8 song CD

Spain's version of every "punk" band in America. (MD)
subterfuge; PO Box 46055, 28080 Madrid Spain

Blood Filloas Versus Frogger- split, 7"

Blood Filloas play Rockabilly inspired garage punk. It's nothing special. Frogger win the battle with their two songs, "I Want You" and "Nectoplasm". These two songs do the Screeching Weasel thing really well. Fast pop punk with squeaky vocals is usually a great combination, and Frogger proves that with these two songs. (JP)
Subterfuge Records PO Box 46055 28020 Madrid

Blood-Gin - 7-inch

A less talented nomeansno not trying hard to make friends. Songs about drinking, fucking and not liking much at all. (bobe)
V.M.L. PO box 183, Franklin Park, IL 60131

Bobdole - BÖb Döle cassette

Oh my gosh... This is hilarious. Silly, quirky music that does nothing but rag on Bob Dole. The songs have plenty of Bob Dole samples and lyrics like "gimme your right hand, I wanna shake it." The good thing is that most songs are short enough that they don't get boring, many clock in at under a minute. Fans of stuff like Negativland will love this. (MM)
Fyooq State Records PO Box 25697 LA, CA 90025

Bottom 12 - Songs for the Disgruntled Postmen CD

What's with bands with numbers in their names these days? Where there eleven "Bottoms" before this one wonder? Where they all this bad? This was produce by Bad Religion's singer Greg Graffin and even features him singing back up on one track... whoopee doo da day. You would think that Greg, who I consider a man with some brains and sense of "PC" (for lack of a better term) morals, would not get involved with a bunch of tough guy hoodlums like these guys. I quote "...gonna go shit-kicking", go relieve some tension / taken bribes and skimming' dough/ faking' reports and molesting 'ho's... this is how Bottom 12 operates." This is a bunch of shit. The music is bad, generic punk that tries to be interesting by adding a horn section. (MM)

Strap On Records PO Box 4258 Malibu CA 90264

Boyz Nex' Door- Action, 7"

No, this isn't the new gangsta rap group. These boyz get bizzy in Italy, another in a long line of foreign bands I've had the perverse pleasure of reviewing this month. But I'll survive. It's for the kids! Anyway, this initially sounds like Hifi & the Roadburners, but they soon shake the sound of Motown's Victory records stalwarts. They develop into an up tempo garage punky thang, although suffer with songwriting difficulties at times. Kinda good, I sorta dig it. (GG)

Helter Skelter via degli Ausoni, 84 - 00185 Roma Italy

Braid-I'm afraid of Everything, 7"

Real artsy emo. I'm very impressed that they're doing something new and different. Make Fugazi more laid back and you've got a rough idea. It's not really my thing, but for some reason I can't help but like it. Then again, it'll probably never cross my turntable again. Take a listen though, that's for sure. (WD)
Grand Theft Autumn; PO Box 4055; Urbana, IL 61801

Brawl — Thalidomide, CD/EP

Old-style hardcore by this Irish band, very catchy, good lyrics, no nonsense — not a band to be confused with the Cranberries. Extremely tight, with a nice crushing sound. Not much more you can say — if you like good hardcore, a worthwhile purchase. (DC)
Allied Recordings, PO Box 460683, San Francisco, CA 94146-0683

The Bristles - Last Years Youth, LP

I've never said this about a band I've reviewed before, but I'm damn near honored to recommend these guys. I can't believe I was chosen to review something so perfect. This record is truly a beautiful thing. I admit that I usually don't think beauty when writing about drunk pogo bands, but these guys are unusually special. The Bristles (and not the inane Bristle bucko! There is a difference ya know....) are the kind of band that, when listened to, bring to mind the good that can actually come about from punk rock. We're not going to change the world here, I don't see any revolutions starting against the oppression of globalist conglomerates or oppressive New World Order thugs. (like the CIA, BATF, and UN "Peace" keepers) What punk really gives us is music, something to live for — not die for. Oh yeah, this record is great, buy it, you'll love it. (Unless you like Mutant Pop, cuz then you're helpless.) (GG)

Beer City Records PO Box 26035 Milwaukee, WI 53226-0035

Broken-Defy the Season LP

Hellllooo full-on 1990! Chugga-chugga guitar, fast beats, screamed choruses, action poses of all the band members in the record, fat pants, Krishna-esque chokers, it's all in there. Defy the Season? Defy the era. Live in the past boys, yesindeedy. (DS)
Standfast PO Box 973 Lilburn GA 30226

By All Means-LP

Straight Edge hardcore that isn't chugga chugga, but isn't really anything else. Just terrible hardcore punk that I could do without. (WD)
Green Records

Cabal - Multiorgasmic +1, 7"

This is a different record for 1996, would have fit better in Simple Machines around 91-92. 1/3 Half Japanese, 1/3 Emo-esque and 1/3 MTV sounding. Very fun and interesting. I suggest if this sounds like your cup of tea than order up this slab. (EA)
Westside Records, 8267 Brandywine Lane, Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Cable-Variable Speed Drive, CD

What a surprise here! Heavy as shit layered emo-esque hardcore. This kind of sound immediately brings to mind bands like Dead and Gone even though the total sound isn't really alike. Really good shit though with awesome music and perfectly screamed vocals. My only complaint is that the songs are a little too long, 4 minutes is a little too much. But very good work. I would expect a seriously kicked butt when seen live. (WD)
Doghouse; POB 8946; Toledo, OH 43623

Cam-s/t, 7"

While I give them credit for being decent musicians, I can't help but find this music bland. Boring, if you will. The thing that gets me, though, are the lyrics. They're gorgeous and inspired. I wish I liked their style, but it's too slowed down, finding ground between emo and alternative. (JP)
Allied PO Box 460683 SF, CA 94146

Candy Snatchers - S/T, CD

I have heard so much about his band live and according to this CD I think that they might be kind of would. The music is very New Bomb Turks (a lot of this lately except form the Turks themselves). Very loud and clean production make this worth repeated listens. (EA)
Safehouse PO Box 5349, West Lebanon, NH 03784

Cards in Spokes - "Stix, nix, hix, pix" CD

Melodic punk similar to old Face2Face. (bobb)
Allied Records

Cast Iron Hike, 7"

Oh my holy mother of God it's heavy metal!
The singer is even high-pitched. This brings me
back to my pre-punk metal days. This is stop-
start hardcore gone WAY TOO FAR. (WD)
Trustkill; 23 Edge Lane; Tinton Falls; NJ 07724

Catharsis - CD

Holy terror of hell!!!! This CD combines all
previous (and often hard to find) efforts with
some unreleased stuff of North Carolina's
evilest sounding hardcore band. Very heavy,
very interesting, very good. These guys are
not afraid to try new things with rhythm, key,
and song structure but it all works, and very
well at that. This is the kind of stuff that is
new and fresh enough to be good, but not so
much that it's inaccessible. While Catharsis
has often been compared to their pals from
Cleveland, Integrity, I feel that comparison is
unwarranted. This stuff is good. Look for
them to tour the south during December and
January with Ascension. (MM)
CrimethInc. Records 2695 Rangewood Drive
Atlanta, GA 30345

Celestial Magenta-Let's Rumble, CS

Alright girlrock. It's kind of like Cub with a
tougher (read: more like L7 kinda.... (not
necessarily a good thing...)) singer. I could
see this band progressing into something
cool, but for now I think I'll pass. I mean,
it's not terrible, but it's certainly not listen-
able. It does however come with a
funny/cute sticker! (WD)
Tonic records; no address

Chalkline/Figurehead - split, 7"

Two hardcore bands both bad are on this
split 7". Chalkline are hardcore band that
plays NYHC with gruff vocals and is boring.
Figurehead are an emo band with nothing
special or exciting about them. The one cool
thing about this release is the packaging.
Instead of having cover printed up they just
cut a manila envelope in half pasted the band
names on the cover and the record labels
name on the back. Not that it makes the
record any better but the packaging is a
change of pace. (MG)
Shandle, 7950 Mentor Ave, #G8, Mentor OH
44060

Chamberlain-Fate's Got a Driver LP

Split Lip always made me want to steal a car just to
drive it & me offa the nearest bridge. Chamberlain
(the artists formerly known as Split Lip) is no differ-
ent, just make it a motorcycle & a cliff. The dying
bunny vocals are even more prevalent, as are the pre-
tentious lyrics, to top it off, the 4 color booklet is
filled with Hallmark card soft-focus photos of sunrises
& windows. Take this band out of their misery. (DS)
Doghouse PO Box 8946 Toledo OH 43623

Cheetah Chrome and the Metal Boys - S/T, 10"

Cheetah Chrome should have given up over a
decade ago. Boring record that is relying on the
past. Oh yeah, its on pink/white marble swirl
vinyl, as if that makes it any better. (EA)
Get Hip PO Box 666 Canonsburg, PA 15317

Cherubs-Short of Popular, CD

Noisy indie/alternative stuff that I could really live with-
out. Female vocals, slow boring hooks. I'm sure some-
one thinks they're the next big thing. Keep dreaming.
Did I mention the annoying hot licks? (WD)
Trance Syndicate; PO Box 49771; Austin, TX 78765

Chinchilla - 7"

Bluesy rock stuff with female vocals... sounds
very "alternative" to me. Sorta reminds me of
early REM though not nearly as good. This is
pretty cruddy. (MM)
Revelation / Crisis Records PO Box 5232 Huntington
Beach, CA 92615-5232

Chisel-8 a.m. All Day, CD

Clanky, silly, and charming. My initial reaction
was "damn this is annoying," but a second listen
brought me into the wonderful goofiness of this
crazy....er....thing. Kinda mod, kinda dancy.
Listen and see. It should lift your heart. (WD)
Gern Blandsten; POB 356; River Edge, NJ 07661

Chore - Soda Noise, 7"

Chore has an amazing ability at taking the Ann
Arbor noise thing and mixing it with an emo and
Touch and Go sound. The result is some damn
interesting music that plays over and over real well.
Highly recommended. (EA)
Chore 743 Miller Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Chump - 7"

This totally lacks energy. It sounds like they're trying
to be lounge-y and hip and bluesy and surfy and
garagey but they just end up sounding realllly s-l-
o-w and uninspired. This is pretty generic. (KB)
Stylus Records / 10711 NE 198th St / Bothell, WA
98011

Citizen Fish - "Thirst" CD

Leftist Brit-punk with ska and oi influences. Not
sure what the hype's about — it's very mediocre to
my ears. (bobb)
Lookout / Bluurg Records

Civil Dissident-Menzie's Crack, LP

A discography of this early/mid-80's Australian
band. They played pretty standard hardcore that is
nothing too spectacular nowadays, but obviously
was then. They're actually real good if you want
the old school feel. (WD)
Prank; POB 410892; San Francisco, CA 94141

**Coleman/Three Studies for a Crucifixion-
Split LP**

Coleman is an almost perfect carbon copy of
Impetus Inter, even managing to find a singer that
sounds exactly like Hake. Who wants a replica
when you can have the real thing? Three Studies
just sends me for a snooze, not even having the
brains to sound like a better band. (DS)
no label name, no address... good work, boys!

Corm — Audio Flame Kit, CD

Beginning with a long, beautiful piece, "Then I
built my own violin" somewhat reminiscent of
Rodan, this Washington D.C. band then dives into
Jawbox/Wreck territory, with off-kilter guitars, a
bit of Fugazi in the vocals and passionate, yet
abstract lyrics. A really neat album, which man-
ages not to sound like anyone in particular, while
incorporating cool things from other bands.
"Though I speak in the tongues of men and
angels" sounds a bit like the Jesus Lizard musically,
while other songs completely rock out. And, most
interestingly, the album is framed by a series of
quiet, understated instrumentals with interlock-
ing guitar textures and strange ringing harmonics.
Highly recommended. (DC)
Shute Records/Discord Records/Corm PO Box 2291,
Kensington, MD 20891

Counterblast-Balance of Pain, LP

Metaly slowed down hardcore with synthesizers and
scary background vocals. Yeah, it kicks butt. That's
right, they have a whole shitload of power behind
them, very cool, and very frightening. Turn the
lights down and turn it up. Brutal. (WD)
Profane Existence

Take this band out of their misery

Crisis Under Control - Initiation LP

Glad to see something besides the Olympics came out of Atlanta this summer... CUC play late 80's style hardcore not unlike Gorilla Biscuits. While not nearly as memorable as GB, Crisis Under Control are quite good. A good solid release. (MM)

Break Even Point Records Via Vallebome 28, 00168 Rome, Italy

Crucifucks - L.D. Eye, CD

What the fuck am I supposed to say? Doc Dart lives right in my town and has been running a cool little baseball card shop/record/junk shop for a long time now. A local legend and known internationally, Doc falls way short here. The Wisconsin fans may like parts of L.D. Eye but each song clocks in at about 6-7 minutes and borders the sound of Led Zeppelin. If it wasn't for the great vocals of Doc and his lyrics this CD would have been in the crap pile without a doubt. It is a shame that they didn't release this under Little Doc's Eye (the real name of his band) and not revert to the old Crucifucks name to sell units. Jello and Alternative Tentacles knew what they were doing there. I do suggest that if you are in Lansing, come and see Doc's shop and visit the Iggy Pop wax museum while you are at it. (EA)

Alternative Tentacles

Crutch-Sold by Weight, CD

Crutch sounds a little too hard rock for my tastes. While to music is capable of rocking at times, almost at the musician-core level of performance, it always manages to sink back into hard rock mode. Fans of Victim's Family, Hedgehog or NoMeansNo might like this. (BVH)

Bong Load Custom Records: PO Box 931538 Hollywood, Ca 90093-1538

Cypher in the Snow - Badass and Free, 7"

Outpunk puts out another 7", which is normally an exciting thing. This record falls short for myself. Seven gay women including a couple of the Gr'ups. Horns adorn this record as well. It is all a little too crazy in a sense. I was expecting more though. Maybe it is too many cooks in the kitchen to bring this together. (EA)

Outpunk, POB 170501, SF CA, 94117

Damnation A.D.-Misericordia, CD

I was expecting something noisier from these guys. Instead this has kind of a chugga chugga feel to it. I'm not talking like Earth Crisis or anything, but it's just much more rock and roll than I would expect from them. After really expecting

to like it I find myself disappointed. Five studio songs, five live (with good recording though...).

I'll pass. (WD)

Jade Tree

Das Kriminal, 7"

Pretty cool sludgy punk rock. Surprisingly so even. I usually don't like the slower side of hardcore, but this keeps a pretty good intensity level up and is pretty all around rockin'. They remind me a bit of their scene mates Damad. (WD)

Goatlord; PO Box 14230; Atlanta, GA 30324

The Daytonas - S/T, 7"

Exactly what you expect from a b/w cover with a guitar on it. Surf/Reverb all the way. Nothing new. Nothing hit-single about it. I wonder who is paying \$3-4 for a two song 7" such as this anymore. (EA)

Solamente 124 St. Marks Place #2 Brooklyn, NY 11217

Death Wish Kids - There's nothing in School They Can't Teach You on the Streets 7"

Loud, fast, angry hardcore that straddles the line between old school and new school. Screamed vocals, feedback, the whole nine... surprisingly good stuff. (MM)

Hopscotch Records PO Box 1143 Cardiff, CA 92007

Disgruntled Nation - Kill Crazy Rampage, 7"

This is exactly the kind of hardcore I don't like. The music is not all that bad but the monotonous drab voice with the retarded lyrics (some samples: "so just tell me you'll be here in the end even if I wet the bed" "but every time I think of you I shit my pants") are a huge turn off. No thanks. (KB)

917 Patrick Creek Rd. / Kalispell, MT 59901

Doughnuts-Feel me Bleed, CD

Doughnuts is hands-down the worst band to ever, ever, ever do straight edge hardcore. The music is bad and overly metal and the singer (yes she's a girl, get over the novelty and realize the truth) is horrendous. Why anyone would listen to this trash is beyond me. (WD)

Victory

Drake Tungsten-Six Pence for the Sauces, 7"

Some guys playing acoustic guitar, or electric and drums, and making melodies that have the potential to be pretty but are just annoying. The only good part of this record is the song title "He was soon to undergo an experience for which his long training as an aristocrat, a gentleman, and an officer had scarcely prepared him". BAD! (WD)

D.T. PO Box 684651; Austin, TX 78768

The Ducky Boys-White Slum, CS

Ok, bad '77 101. Take really standard riffs that everyone has already played 100 times before and play 'em a couple more. Then come up with some really bad "catchy, sing-a-long" choruses sung by someone who sounds like they should be in a metal band (except with a little more soul and street cred.). These boys (pun intended) get an "A." To sum it up imagine Blanks '77 sounding like complete crap. (WD)

The Ducky Boys; 100s Dunstable St., Charleston, MA 02129

Duotang — Smash The Ships And Raise The Beams, CD

A band clearly drunk on images — specifically images of mod-rock star types in swingin' London in the mid-sixties, these guys have crafted a sound best described as an ironic update of the Kinks, played by Canadians who have some talent, but not as much talent as Ray Davies. This isn't to say that this is bad — in fact, it's pretty catchy — sort of like the guy who sings for the Beaver Brown Band leading the Jam, with some Tommy Keane thrown in for good measure. But it sounds very, very derivative, which I guess is sort of the point. They make no bones about it, in their liner notes they name check the Jam and Joy Division and the Who and the Kinks. Hey, everyone's got to have their heroes, and there are worse ways to honor them than to create a catchy album in their image. Of course, you could go and buy "The Kinks Chronicles" and hear the real thing — which is much better — but that's nit-picking, eh? (DC)

Mint Records, Inc., PO Box 3613 Main Post Office, Vancouver, BC Canada V6B3Y6

Dwarves-Toolin' for a Warm Teabag, LP

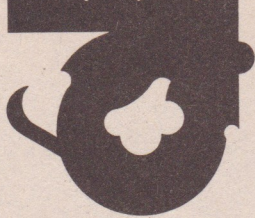
Hmmm.... a classic band that's for sure, but I don't they do anything for me. It's just pretty generic and snotty. And I'm not a fan of the recording. So it goes. Maybe new schoolers like me just can't understand....(smirk). (WD)

Recess Records

The Effigies - 12/16/95, 7"

From what I understand the Effigies were some fairly big 80's hardcore bands from Chicago. I guess they've reformed and put out this release on V.M.L. The music seems like good early 80's hardcore before much of it went metal. I generally don't like live stuff

I guess if I was friends with these guys I'd think this is pretty funny...



and this 7" is no exception. The songs come across as stale and generic sounding. This is not something I'd buy. (MG)
V.M.L.; PO BOX 183, Franklin Park, IL 60131

El Bad-Bad Mutherfucker, CD

This could be the worst band name of the year. Gregg Ginn's new band and it's really bad (hence the name???). Hardrock trying hard to be punk rock. This sucks. (WD)
SST

Electric Frankenstein - Action High / Out There, 7"

This is it, straight up rock and roll. Any New Bomb Turks fan will like EF. After a few disappointing CDs this 7" convinced me that Electric Frankenstein are for real, hell yeah! (EA)
Intensive Scare, PO Box 142 NY NY 10002

Endpoint-If the Spirits are Willing, CD

Stop-Start hardcore, but the first song seems almost more like a surf-song at times. It's very sing-a-long oriented. But none of the riffs are catchy. Song-writing is not a skill this band possesses. And that's a bad thing. (WD)
Doghouse; POB 8946; Toledo, OH, 43623

Equity-7"

I'll admit it, I got excited about the record when I saw it had bones and animal corpses on the cover. That's just how hardcore goes, ok? It's pretty cool working that kind of early Buzzoven sound with a kind of sludgy noisy feel, but still actually moving at a decent pace so it doesn't get boring. They've got some metal hot licks too which make it cool to nod your head to. If Dystopia and the like are up your alley check this out. Pretty cool stuff I say. (WD)
At A Loss Records; PO Box 3231; Auburn, AL 36831

Excruciating Terror - Expression of Pain CD

My first thought when I picked this up was, "hmm... fans of ENT?" As I gazed at the insert's obligatory band photo with singer wearing one of their t-shirts, my question was answered... ET has one of those spikey, albeit legible, logos lots of songs on the disc so you should know what they sound like. While it's nothing special, it's certainly not bad. I would have loved this about a year or two ago. (MM)
Pessimiser Theologian PO Box 1070 Hermosa Beach, CA 90254

Exploder - Familiarity Breeds Contempt, 7"

This has a really stoopid cover: 2 girls with big tits (one with a stick of dynamite up her twat) and a demon with an ignited lighter held up to the wick. Brilliant. Now on to the lyrical content: brainless, forced rhyming, and nonsensical respectively for the 3 songs on this 7". It sounds like they're a bad metal band trying to rip off late Soundgarden. I guess if I was friends with these guys I'd think this is pretty funny but since I don't know them, this just bores the shit out of me. (KB)
205 S. Oval Dr. / Chardon, OH 44024

The Fags - My Boyfriend is a Janitor, 7"

First of, what a stupid band name. This recording is extremely low-fi (done on a tape recorder). Fast, shitty, raw punk with apparently very little talent backing it up and crappy sounding loopy female vocals. I don't know why but I like this. I would love to play this at a party at my house sometime and see all the looks of disgust on people's faces. (KB)
Westside Records / 8267 Brandywine Ln. / Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Fastfood Aerobitch "No Beer left" 7"

Es muy mal. (MD)
Purch Records; aparado 60167, 28080 Madrid, Spain

F.H. Hill Co./4, split 7"

4 is jerky pop that I want off my turntable. F.H. Hill Co. sounds like the band is right at 45, but I'm listening to the singer (definitely the sucker of the band) at 33. One of those records God never meant to have anyone release. (WD)
Girth; PO Box 11942; Costa Mesa, AC 92627

Figuritas - 45 singles series, 7"

This single is "the first in a limited edition series of split 7" singles on Red Dawg Records..." and features two bands: Rail and thee autobots. Well worth a few bucks, as both bands posses a reasonable amount of redeeming qualities. (MD)
Red Dog Records; PO Box 2192, Bloomington, in, 47402-2192

Filmstar, 7"

It sounds like grunge to me that's trying to sound cool and emo. Rest assured though, this is a terrible record. (WD)
Girth; POB 11942; Costa Mesa, CA 92627

Fireworks - Off the Air, CD

Fireworks do the lo-fi rock and roll as well as anyone. A mix tape with Fireworks and the Oblivians would be a desert island album to say the least. I would suggest this disc. (EA)
Au Go Go PO Box 542d Melbourne VIC 3001 Australia

Five By Nine-Recognize CD

This CD reminds me of all of the Reason To Believe rip off bands that surfaced in the post-Straight Edge scene of the early 90s. Kind of a Shadow Season, later-period Turning Point feel with some out of place mosh parts and even a rip off of an AC/DC riff. I might have liked this back in the day. Maybe Dave Larson still would (that's for the Warzone crack, Dave). (BVH)
One Foot; P.O. Box 3834 Cherry Hill, NJ 08034-0592

Flatstör - Nix Electricity, 7"

The cover sums it up: "3 singers, an old guitar, that's all. Songs about romance, dominatrices, and work." Yup. Enjoy. (MD)
Madame Sarah Records; call 800 607-2379

Fleas and Lice-Global Destruction, LP

Just the political hardcore you would expect from them. Consistent good hardcore and a little more complicated than most bands out there making it quite pleasurable. Male/Female vocals and a booklet are the nice pluses to an overall good record. (WD)
Profane Existence

Fleas and Lice/Assrash, split 7"

More of the above from Fleas and Lice while Assrash serve up more of their drunken, good-time hardcore. If you're going to like this (as I do...) you're probably already familiar enough with the bands for this review not to exist. So put it on and sing along. (WD)
Profane Existence

The Flim Flams — s/t, LP

Like some non-existent girl group off some 60s garage rock compilation, they sound like the B-52s covering the Count Five. Maybe the B-52s covering early Blondie. Something like that. Anyway, it's pretty cool party music, but not exactly a revelation. Nonetheless, a fun record — reminiscent of Thee Headcoatees. (DC)
V.M.L., Post Office Box 183, Franklin Park, IL 60131

Four- Play With Everything, 7"

This is kind of low on the production points, but high on the self released punk rock record spirit and style. Four is a good back to basics upbeat band. I like that kind of spunk... the music sounds like a bunch of kids get together and love what they are doing. Four isn't trying to rip anyone off musically, they're just playing fun punk rock the way it should be. (JP)
No Reason PO Box 428 Ft. Collins, CO 80522



...but since I don't know them, this just bores the shit out of me

Franklin-Roy is Dead 7"

Wow. Franklin is setting itself up to be one of the new powerhouses in the emo/hardcore circuit with this 7". Unapologetically original in a scene that increasingly isn't, Franklin takes a number of risks with this 7", slowing things down, reverbing them up, even breaking tempo for a quasi ska second. Definitely one to watch. (DS)

The Great American Steak Religion.. no address

F.T.E.-Front Toward Enemy, 2x7"

Mix 7 Seconds with a bit of metal and more of a chugga chugga singer and you have F.T.E. If that sounded like a good review, I just didn't sound bitter enough. This sucks big time. I bet they like gansta rap too. NY/HC=Yuck! (WD)

Exit; PO Box 263; New York, NY 10012

The Fumes - Flamethrower, 7"

A record for the rebellious, angst-ridden youth of today. (MD)

Trench Records; PO Box 1222 Spokane, WA, 99210

Furious George - Goes Apel, EP

MRR's George Tabb (a great writer I may say) teams up with his friends, including Dee Dee for this one. Kinda NY or Midwest sound with a West Coast dessert. It makes a great EP. To say it sounds like the Ramones would be what you would want me to say.

It does and everyone will buy this one up. Get it on vinyl cause it is way too expensive on CDEP. (EA)

Lookout PO Box 11374 Berkeley, CA 97412

F.Y.P.-Toilet Kids Bread, LP

What a shock to old fans! Pretty straight forward POP-PUNK??? Just as goofy and snotty, but the speed and reckless abandon is gone. I must say that I am somewhat disappointed though. I really don't think I'll be listening again. Oh well. I'm sure this will win a whole bunch of new fans. (WD)

Recess

Gasoline- S/T, CD

I seem to get a lot of this kind of weird ass shit rock kind of stuff. Don't get me wrong, I love weird. I mean, I'm not the straightest arrow in the quiver myself, if you catch me drift.....but enough about me. Gasoline is a basic rock band but do their business in a humor/joking vein, territory successfully traversed by very few outside of NOFX and Guttermouth. Gasoline, while sounding absolutely nothing like the aforementioned bands (a good thing) are not able to capture anything of note humor wise. (not a good thing.) (GG)

Flipside Records

Goobar Patrol - vacation, CD

These guys don't stop to take a breath as they barrel their way through fourteen mega pop-punk hits. A friend once told me "it's the pop I love, but the punk that I crave." If that rings true in your heart as well, waste no time, spud, buy this. (MD)

Them's Good Records; PO Box 8, corby northamptonshire NN17 2XZ UK

Goobar Patrol, 7"

Slight ska influence on this one. It's enjoyable, yet nothing ground breaking. The band is probably fun live. This record sounds like kids would have loved it a few years ago. But it's fun, light listening. I really can't complain. (JP)

Them's Good, no address. Fax: 44 0 1536 266246

Grapefruit "Dorkabilly Stew" CD

How refreshing: The joy of a power pop band with none of the distortion. Highly recommended for those who have that strange fetish where they like to buy good music. (MD)

Second Guess; PO Box 9382, Reno, NV, 89507

Groovie Ghoulies - Born in the Basement, CD

This record is tough to figure out. The music reminds me of something Lookout! would have put out in the middle of its career. Very rock n' roll with a pop element. Often the Groovie Ghoulies venture into different territories. What keeps me from requesting this one is the vocals. They are very high school band sounding. A boy who hasn't reached puberty. Nothing really wrong with it, but doesn't fit the music. It could be the production that does it, very clean and separated. (EA)

Lookout PO Box 11374 Berkeley, CA 97412

H2O CD

New York hardcore. There's lyrics about being drug free, while the rest of the band smokes pot and drinks beer, which the cover clearly shows, and which I think is cool. Unfortunately, this band seems to belong to the kind of scene that relishes in old-school HC youth ideology, and they thank the U.S. Thugs, so you decide. (bobe)

Blackout!, PO Box 1575, NYC, NY 10009

The Hal Al Shedad-The Sound of Swords Clashing, 7"

These guys are fucking awesome. I saw them live and instantly had to own their records. Nerdy emo core, but its not really very noisy. It's swift moving melodic and really pretty. I'm stumbling for a description because they are actually very original. If you're looking for some powerful emo, pick this up. (WD)

At A Loss; PO Box 3231; Auburn, AL 36831

The Hall Monitors-Exercising the right to Exercise!, Tape

Although not as generic as the name led me to think, these guys are pretty much just your standard three-chord group of angry kids. I would definitely change the name. I would expect better from them in some time because it's obvious that they're trying to do something different, but I don't think it's ready to be showcased to the world yet. (WD)

Michael Motorcycle; 1929 Shore Ln.; Surfside Beach, SC 29575

Hammerbrain - One Word, 7"

In one word, yuck! This is lame with the capital L! Just bad, bad, crap. Like bluesy alternative cheese rock nonsense. I should play this for the Pearl Jam/ Phish heads at my school. They might like it. I, for one, will pass. (GG)

PO Box 589 NY, NY 10014

Herbal Flesh Tea - Dive In b/w Shave, 7" single

Side A makes me think of the Red Hot Chili Peppers if they played punk. Side B is more punk tune with a alterna/rock feel. The music is hard to pin down. The bass is mixed the loudest and you can hear the bass player doing his technical stuff which reminds me of Flea (hence the Chili Peppers sound). The music has varying tempos and will be fast and hard edged with an angst feel and then break into this slow mellow part and then go back into a fast part. This release really genre specific and seems like something that would do well on collage radio. (MG)

Liberty Park Recordings, 3911 Williams, Downers Grove, IL 60515

Heroines - Big Pink, 7" EP

Above average, mid-tempo hardcore/punk with female vocals that doesn't take itself to seriously. The lyrics are funny and rough production gives this release the primitive early hardcore sound of the late 70's when hardcore was still punk. A cool release on pink vinyl. (MG)

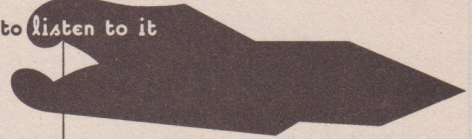
Heroines, PO BOX 92671, Henderson, NV 89009

The Heromakers-7"

Normal pop-punk nothing special. The singer sounds like Fat Mike when he tries to sound dumb. This ain't nothing special. (WD)

Just Add Water; no address

There's nothing about this release that would entice me to want to listen to it



Hickey - You Motherfucker, 12"

I can't believe I got an actual LP for review! This is a happy day. Anyway, pretty much every song on this sounds completely different from the others. Sometimes kind of Rockabilly, sometimes indie rockish (almost Superchunky), sometimes punkish with lots of well-placed (unidentifiable) samples and different sounds thrown in. It may sound chaotic but it actually fits together very well. Actually, all this only applies to the first side. The second side is sort of nutty (hard to characterize) and noisy and kind of annoying. The hand-screened/painted cover is a nice touch as well as the art in the enclosed booklet. Very whimsical and enjoyable (the first side, that is). (KB)

LP only, \$6 / Aaron Muentz / Probe Records / PO Box 5068 / Pleasonton, CA 94566

Hourglass-s/t 7"

Hey guess what? We're an emo band, so we're going to get really crazy and be noisy and have a singer that sounds like he's vomiting into the mic. Plus, we're going to make a little booklet to go along with our 7" that features cracked rub-on type and mangled photos of the band. And we're going to do all this because it's never been done before. Welcome to 1997; I hope this trend ends soon. (DS)

Immigrant Sun PO Box 421 Buffalo NY 14223

Houseboy- s/t, 7"

This is what would have happened if Garden Variety were just a bit less lethargic. The music is fast and catchy, but full of emo hooks and vocal stylings (only the vocals are rushed and it doesn't sound like the singer is a big crybaby). Good stuff here, by all means, try it. (JP)

Watching Records 3009 Huntington Drive
Arlington Heights, IL 60004

Hummer- Glamorous, 7"

Hey- I caught you Hummer! You're trying to fool me into thinking you're Shellac! Well it ain't gonna work....Even if you did swipe the horribly annoying packaging of their first two 7"s (we all remember them — the ones that can't be opened without ripping the sleeve...) and tried your damndest to sound like them, you still don't have Albini so you suck! Fah! (GG)

Hot Water Music C/O Steve Wolff 1332 Mifflin
Street 2nd Floor, Phil. PA 19148

Hurl-A Place Called Today, CD

A band where every song has a nice light intro. They just aren't good. It's just a band that shouldn't happen. All their songs should be 15 second intro's, not 3 minute songs. (WD)

Third Gear; PO Box1886; Royal Oak, MI 48068

Impetus Inter- An Infinite Capacity for Romance LP

Over a year in the making and still ten years ahead of its time. Impetus Inter is the band that you only wished you saw, packing more vision, more anger, and more message into tight song structures and a tiny singer than most bands can do in their entire existence. This LP takes Impetus Inter into another level, discarding much of their previous as-fast-and-as-grating-as-possible sound for newer, greener pastures. A modern masterpiece. (DS)

Cerebellum; PO Box 40308, St Paul, MN 55405

Infections - Kill for You / The Sign of a Good Time, 7"

Ex-Rip Offs bring us a new single and it picks off right where they left off. The first song, "Kill for You" is a classic right form the start and song two fills the space up just fine. This is a single in a "hit" single sense. That is what they were created for, listen up kids. Singles are supposed to have a hit song on it, not a vehicle for bands who won't make an album. Oh yeah, get this one now! (EA)

Rip Off 581 Maple Ave. San Bruno, CA 94066

In/humanity-The nutty anti-christ, LP

Good God almighty this record is fucking awesome! Incredible piercing music and vocals. Total hardcore, but also played really well with good original stuff and they have a sense of humor too (hence the title...). One of those few records now adays that breaks new ground. Great! (WD)

Passive Fist; PO Box 9313; Savannah, GA 31412

The Insane - Live in Europe 1982, LP

I'm not the biggest fan of live recordings — I think VMLive sucks wang and "Texas Speed Trials" is the only live record I'd call vital. Usually live recordings are far too muddy sounding, (as is the case with the otherwise superb "A Curious Mix of People" Austin, TX comp...) and this record faults in the same way. Regardless, it is a decent documentation of what sounds like a pretty good 80's British Oi/streetpunk band. (GG)

Retch Records 49 Rose Crescent, Woodvale,
Southport, Merseyside, England, PR8 3RZ

Jeffrey Clark-Sheer Golden Hooks, CD

The record company is trying to make this sound good by comparing it to psychedelic guitar rock. The ONLY good thing about this lame shit is the title. Sheer Golden Hooks is ingenious, it makes me wish I'd been able to title something it first. (WD)

Independent Project; POB 1033; Sedona, AZ 86339

Jenhitt-Prototype Sound Series 7"

Whoever mixed this record really didn't know what they were doing. Some songs are too muddy, others are too tinny. It's a shame too, because underneath the bad mixing is a really good band. One could definitely pull the Samuel or Copper references to describe this; inventive, poppy, light hardcore with nicely sung female vocals. I want to hear more from Jenhitt. (DS)

Shute; 9 Keystone Court Gaithersburn MD 20878

Jet Boys - Radio Thunder, 10"

Holy Moses! I put off listening to this for awhile and am hitting myself for it. The Jet Boys tear it up in the Japanese style. Kind of like Teengenerate but less straight up. Very crazy, very sloppy, very wild, very exciting. A Fan of the Devil Dogs, Teengenerate and such will put the Jet Boys up in the ranks with this wonderful 10" from Get Hip! (EA)

Get Hip PO Box 666 Canonsburg, PA 15317

Jet Boys - With Freddy Lynx, 7"

The Jet Boys are great but this record with Freddy Lynxx is horrible. Kind of country/rock n' roll, this 7" seems to fall real short. The female vocals are nice but don't hold up together with the music. (EA)

Ultra Under Records

Jimmy Keith & His Shocky Rockers- I Love Girls, 7"

Hey, he loves beautiful women! Don't get mad at him for that. He has the right to love whoever he damn well pleases, so buzz off. The problem here though is that Keith tells us of his love for girls in a fairly uninspired garage rock record that lacks the punch to be a "punk" band. OK stuff. Probably better than OK soda, except for the Dan Clowes artwork on said soft drink can. That was great. This isn't. (GG)

Tom Tonk SettinStr, 15 47269 Duisburg Germany

Joan of Arc- Method & Sentiment 7"

Wow, this is totally out of left field! Filled with bizarre sine waves and some of the sparsest instrumentation I've heard this year, this is going to catch a lot of Jade Tree purists off guard. However, what's hiding in the wax is some really

beautiful songs that seem to float out of nowhere, linger for a few moments, and then evaporate into thin air. (DS)

Jade Tree 2310 Kennwynn Rd. Wilmington DE 19810

Joshua-s/t LP

You've got to listen to this a few times to get used to the singer, 'cause he's really singing. He's off key a lot, but when he's on, it's pretty cool, once you get used to it. The mix puts him a little to far forward, making it a bit jarring. To be honest, I'm not that hot on the singer, but the music more than makes up for it. This record just keeps moving, the beat just drives along, fast & catchy, yet throwing in enough change-ups to keep you interested. It's hard to classify, it's a little bit emo, a little bit rock & roll. But do me a favor: next album, mix the singer down a little. (DS)

Immigrant Sun Records PO Box 421 Buffalo, NY, 1422

Judge Nothing-Riveter, CD

Imagine if someone took pop-punk and put a little extra effort into to make it sound kinda neat. Well, it's wasted. this sounds like bad bad bad alterna-rock. This is trash. (WD)

Thick Records

Juice-Fundamental, LP

Ugh, my first thought was when will this be over! Bad bad stuff, kinda trying to be oi and early 80's and shit and it just flat out sucks. (WD)

Reth; 49 Rose Cres.; Woodvale; Southport; PR8 3RZ UK

Know Nothing-7"

Noisy hardcore stuff, nothing grabbing. They could be interesting live, but for now I'd say that I'd like this record's circle to come no where near my turntable's circle if my room was a Venn diagram. (WD)

Youth Power; c/o Philip Deslippe; POB 3923; Manchester, CT 06045

Komeda — The Genius of Komeda, CD

Not exactly the second coming of ABBA, but Scandinavia's finest of the day (on the label that first brought us Veruca Salt, no less) still know how to sound, I don't know, chippy, even as they sound all dissonant when they play their beatlesque lounge-noir melodies in an ever-so-off way. These guys are best described as part of the "space-age bachelor pad" movement, though with a bit more pop (occasionally) and a bit more dissonance. Weird Latin melodies float in around the "jazz" syllings, threatening to turn into "The Girl From Ipanema" one moment and early psychic TV the next. Strange, but oddly enjoyable — kind of like

the "Way-Outs," the band that played on "The Flintstones" Come to Bedrock, Twist, Twist! Anyone have a martini? (DC)

Minty Fresh, PO Box 577400, Chicago, IL 60657

Konstrukt/Kito, split7"

Konstrukt. Close your eyes and picture your friends in a basement banging their instruments and yelling. They've been practicing for an hour and they want you to hear what they've come up with and they're recording it on a boombox. That's Konstrukt. As for Kito they are a more noisy emo outfit. They're Alright. But really just don't have anything that grabs you about them. I could see both bands becoming really great, but this record should come out then, not now. (WD)

Hammerwerk; c/o Dielmar Eicher; Allerheiligenplatz 11/37; A-1200 Wien/Vienna; Austria

Krabs - Working Class, 7"

Oi! Oi! I love the Krabs, some of the nicest guys in the world. Lets set the record straight: They aren't racist skinheads, are against fascism, dedicated to a dying scene, and will help anyone out they can. The music has that Oi! Sound to it, and any fans should gobble this up. Plus Todd will drink any of you under the table to boot. (EA)

Room 13 Records 3505 Kipling, Berkeley, MI 48702

The Last House on the Left CD

You don't need this one quite yet...perhaps in a few years or so. Go see them if they play in your town.... (MD)

Household Name Records; unit 205, the old gramophone works, 326 kensal rd. london, W10 5BZ

Les Hommes Qui Wear Espandrillo - Kairo, CD

Industrial noise rock from Europe. (MG)

bluNoise Records

Les Partisans- Street Gones, 7"

Pretty much straightforward Oi with the occasional horn part to fill in the nooks and crannies. Sung totally in French except "Rude Boy" which makes for a surprisingly funny time. I know virtually no French words at all, so to hear a bunch of gibberish followed by "rude boy" is actually quite hilarious. Other than that, its typical, except for the awesome line art cover and sleeve. Great drawings of various skins and subversives. Striking. (GG)

Limo Life records c/o STROBEL Bruno 4 rue Balzac 94 190 Villeneuve St. George

Les Turdz-Beer is My Co-Pilot, 7"

First comment-BRILLIANT RECORD TITLE! Second coment-badly recorded.

Third comment-get the annoying chick away from the mic! Uck! Fourth comment-pretty boring three chord stuff. Fifth comment-I'm snoozing. (WD)

Recess Records

Lipmonger - "Hook, Line, and Sinkers" 7-inch

There's nothing about this release that would entice me to want to listen to it. It's basic, three-chord punk with an early Screaming Weasel influence. And a bad recording. A really bad recording (the recording studio is listed on the inside sleeve so you know where NOT to go). This is a perfect example of how 7-inches have become the demo of the 90s. (bobe)

\$3 opd. to Seth Hyman, PO box 55580, Atlanta, GA 30308

Load-Lumberjack Death Luge, 7"

Kind of sludgy punk rock. The music is ok (actually it's pretty annoying), but the singer sucks (even worse) and just sounds like a drunken goon (and will probably laugh at that description and think it's cool. (WD)

Lulaby for the Working Class—Consolidation 7"

A band that's somewhere between Palace Brothers and The Band, these guys sound like a less alcoholic, early Tom Waits. Some neat mandolin playing, some banjo—these guys sound like an Appalachian roots band playing the early Rolling Stones catalogue. Cool, in a very sparse way, but cool nonetheless; kind of like unslick country. (DC)

Lumberjack Records, 2543 N. 55th Street, Omaha, NE 68104

The Mad Hatters - demo tape

When I saw the name of the band, I couldn't help but think of the band my high school band beat in a local battle of the bands. We were called Warehouse (after the Hüsker Dü record), and they were called (guess) Mad Hatter. When the singer kicked in, I couldn't help but think of Herman's Hermits. This is silly pop punk that is better than most releases like this that pass through my hands but still not great. The fact that the production is really good for a demo combined with some-



Utter crap...

thing scrawled on the cover leads me to believe that this will be a CD sometime in the future. (MM)
12 Elmwood LaGrange Park, IL 60526

Malefaction-Smothered, CD

Stop-start hardcore that is really lame. They have bits of metal and rap. NY/HC still sucks. (WD)
Out of Enslavement; 484 River Rd. St. Andrews MB; RIA 3C2 CANADA

Mau Maus-The Punk Singles Collection, CD

At their up points they sound kind of like Oi Polloi. At bad points they're just another hardcore band that is kind of catchy, but has nothing interesting musically at all. It's... alright. (WD)
Captain Oi!

Maximillian Colby / Rye Coalition - Split 7"

Here we go again. Maximillian Colby's recording is weak and the style is getting old. The vocals are muddy as hell and we get a dose of slow emo parts as well. On the flip-side Rye Coalition do the fast/slow exchanging emo thing. This guys are incredible live and this 7" doesn't really capture that. On par with their other releases. (EA)
Rert a Records PO Box 4934, Richmond, VA 23220

The Meatmen -3/3/95, 7"

I've never been a fan of the Meatmen. Their heavy metal punk or riff punk isn't really my thing. This 7" has not converted me. I'd rather listen to a Meatmen album than this. The live quality isn't bad just sterile. There's no raw aspect that gives this an intense feel. I don't think fans of the band will like this that much. (MG)
V.M.L.; PO BOX 183, Franklin Park, IL 60131

Melt-Banana — Scratch or Snitch, CD

My friend Eric tells me that this was one of the funniest live bands he ever saw, and after hearing this album, I can imagine it perfectly. A tiny Japanese woman screaming at the top of her lungs while some other Japanese men make lots of noise. To put it in some perspective, KK Null of Zeni Geva plays on the album, and it was recorded by Steve Albini in a particularly abrasive mood. It is avant garde, extremely fucked up, and quite entertaining — though not music you can, say, listen to while concentrating on anything

else. Very much in the style of the Boredoms, or Space Streakings, except even weirder, if that's at all possible. If you like Japanese noise bands (and, it should be noted, I LOVE Japanese noise bands) then you will undoubtedly like this. Sort of like Yoko Ono on helium — if that helps. (DC)
Skin Graft, PO Box 257546, Chicago IL 60625

Milhouse-modern problems, old fashioned solutions, and classic mistakes, 7"

Pretty cool hardcore emo here. They sound kind of like early Antioch Arrow and Born Against, except more normal musically than the former, and not as hardcore as the latter. A very nice record and I bet live they are amazing. (WD)
Wreck-Age; PO Box 263; New York, NY 10012

Mine Tetanus -S/T, LP

NYHC from Germany. Nothing new or original just well produced NYHC with vocals that boarder on death metal and an equal number fast parts and mosh parts. (MG)
Common Cause, Konrad-Adenauer-Str. 58, D - 73529 Bettingen, Germany

Minnow— s/t, 7"

Slow, slightly dreamy pop, sort of like a less depressing Codeine. Songs that wouldn't sound out of place on a Game Theory album, circa 1987. Pretty nice. (DC)
1208a Franklin Street, Richmond, Va. 23220

Mung - S/T, CD

Weak jazzy, heavy metal hardcore. (MG)
Entropy Mobile, 2261 Market St #142, SF, CA 94114

Mutilators - Those darn..., cassette

The Mutilators are a phenomenal blues punkabilly band. It's like the Cramps on speed or Stray Cats if they used lots of distortion and played faster. The Mutilators rock hard because they have the three essential elements that Rockabilly requires lot's of energy, good songwriting and excellent musicianship. (MG)
The Mutilators, 1140 Pine St, #22, SF, CA 94109

The Neighbors - We Refuse to Kiss Ass (or We Love Our Wienie), CD

Woo-hoo, nice photo of a red pimply ass on the cover. I have to say I prefer the photo of the wiener dog. Fast driving punkish hardcore with sort of clean cut vocals that are sung (talked?) pretty fast and usually follow the guitar line. This reminds me occasionally a bit of a much more optimistic upbeat, less dirty sounding D.R.I. (this comparison is probably way out there). Sort of skate punk sounding though there are more melodic songs

here are there. Lyrics encompass every day life, feeling down, feeling happy, and some moral issues (animal rights, anti-cigarette [not pot] smoking). The more I listen, the more this grows on me. It's pretty well produced to boot. (KB)
11383 Surco Dr. / San Diego, CA 92126

New Bomb Turks - Scared Straight, CD

Well this time around the Turks do it a little different. Everyone swears that Epitaph changed their sound. I was talking to Eric and they were recording this before they even signed. What made this one different is the BAND produced the sound. I agree with most that this definitely isn't their best outing. Many true fans will like about 1/3 of this disc. I found that live, the songs blend right into their set so it must be in the recording. Oh yeah, if you haven't heard the New Bomb Turks then put this down and go read Spin (oh, I guess they are in Spin too.....) (EA)
Epitaph 2798 Sunset Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90026

New Sweet Breath - 7"

The production this is very muffled and low which I thought was irritating at first but am starting to like now. My friend Chris says it reminds him of early Moving Targets. Melodic, sort of jangly, fairly fast, a teeny bit garagey, very short, sweet songs (that was in no way intended to be a pun). This is definitely hitting the spot right now. (KB)
Ringin' Ear Records / no address [and no insert - maybe it got lost]

Ninja Attack - my first time, 7"

They sound like ever other "pop-punk" band on earth, but Ninja Attack has something that sets them apart. Perhaps it is the vocals, I am not sure. But if you are into this realm of music, by George, buy this! (MD)
trickshot; 815 rosedal ave #1, Wilmington, DE 19809

NRA - Access to Surf City Amsterdam Only, CD

This is the kind of stuff that I used to think was OK but now I just think it sounds formulaic. Very well done, well produced, tight as hell, shout/sing along fast melodic pop-punk that belongs on Far Wreck Chords. This all sounds the same to me now. (KB)
Offtime Records / PO Box 52114 / Houston, TX 77052

Omaha-Accident, CD

Nice light emo with pretty vocals and music. It comes from that same genre as Texas is the Reason. Hover I don't find this as grabbing. I'm kinda left with a feeling that the songs aren't going anywhere, almost like you're always waiting for the climax and it never comes. (WD)
Doghouse



Sexist, party lyrics set to bad punk rock...

Opposition - Better Days & Bad Advice, LP

This Massachusetts bands plays average noisy emo hardcore. This LP is good despite my lack of interest in this type of music. Some of this sounds like NYHC with fast parts and breakdowns in the middle for all the moshers other songs remind make me think of the Jesus Lizard if they played hardcore. The one problem I have is all the songs start to sound the same and you hear the same musical ideas being repeated. Once the songs start to sound the same the boredom sets in. (MG)

Push-Pull Records, PO Box 471, Allston, MA 02134

Pee Wees — "Where People Smile" LP

Three Italian guys who genuinely believe that they are the Buzzcocks. And its a fairly convincing delusion, actually, as these guys serve up an album full of cool tuneful punk. These guys are obviously having the time of their life. Very catchy, very neat. (DC)

Helter Skelter, Via Degli Ausoni, 84, 00185 Roma

Phantom Surfers - The Great Surf Crash of 97, CD

What can one say? The Phantom Surfers do surf like they were born in the water. I wonder why Lookout! put this out but I am glad they did. There was too many surf bands a year or two ago but now since it isn't "popular" it is great to see the Surfers can put out great records. Exactly what you would expect. Lots of covers, exactly like you would expect. (EA)

Lookout PO Box 11374 Berkeley, CA 97412

Phono-Comb — Fresh Gasoline, CD

An interesting largely-instrumental band (except for the last "song"), with an eclectic mix of styles ranging from a spaghetti western soundtrack for a movie never made ("The Crass and The Switchblade") to an odd, Pixies-ish cover of Brian Eno's "Here Come the Warm Jets" and the Slint-like "Enchante." Quite different from other popular prog-rock instrumental avatars like Don Caballero, this warm recording (by Steve Albini, of all people) is more in the mode of Shadowy Men On A Shadowy Planet, without the heavy surf influence. In other words, these are real songs, that are intended to sound like this without vocals — not just some cool riffs. Really excellent. (DC)

1/4 Stick Records, PO Box 25342, Chicago, IL 60625

Pinheads- CD

Utter crap... Sexist, party lyrics set to bad punk rock... (MM)

Split Records no address given

The Pinkerton Thugs - Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Shit, 7"

Well, it's not that I hate this or anything but it's pretty mediocre kind of wanting to be late 80s punk. There are some good parts to this but overall the songwriting is pretty derivative and actually kind of annoying. A little less than mediocre at best. The last song drags on forever. (KB)

Police Records / RR2 Box 83 / Alfred, ME 04002

The Pissed-Officers/Gerty Farish — Split 7"

Gerty Farish are like early Ween, except even less coherent. Still entertaining, but no one will mistake these cool little artifacts for songs exactly. The Pissed-Officers have a bunch of hilarious lyrics screamed incoherently over generic hardcore. Too bad. The lyrics are a hoot, and if they were more interesting musically, they could be a decent Japanese noise band. (DC)

Sealed Hotel Records & Zines, PO Box 603128, Providence, RI 02906

Pongo— s/t, 7"

Neat indie rock, female vocals, soaring choruses, swelling guitars—a bit pretentious at points, but nothing too bothersome. Sorta like early I.R.S. or Enigma records territory. Likable. (DC)

New Granada Records, PO Box 291044, Tampa, FL 33687

Porch - Skunk Industries, 7"

How to describe this...There are a few weird musical interludes that abruptly change into fast melodic punk that doesn't quite fit into a neat category.

The songs have some bizarre transitions that don't really sound like they belong together in a song but somehow it works. I'll probably have to listen to this about a hundred more times before I decide whether I like it or not but it definitely gets my full attention. (KB)

Harmony Records / Ballo / Auf der Binde 30 / 27313 / Dorverden

Potential Frenzy - Sugar Buzz, CD

Bubble gum rock. Very MTV accessible. Catchy enough to keep me listening but a little to contrived to make me come back for more. Female vocals that would fit right into the K records catalog. If you like that kind of thing I would suggest this. I bet that live they are ten times better than this CD makes them feel. (EA)

Naked Eye Records, 12215 University Blvd. #117, Orlando, FL 32817

The Problematics - Bad Habit / Bad Woman, 7"

Another rippin release from Rip Off Records. These boys have finally captured the energy that they have on vinyl. Two great songs that you will play over and over. The production is Rip Off but better than usual. You should get this, now! Impossible to find is the two-sided version of this 7", it has an extra song but I have heard it isn't worth the severe hunt it will take. One of the best (if not the best 7" of the year). (EA)

Rip Off; 581 Maple Ave. San Bruno, CA 94066

The Prostitutes - Get Me Sick, 7"

The Prostitutes seem to be the flavor of the month in the garage/ '77 world these days, and deservedly so. They rock pretty damn hard with a snotty mix of raunch and attitude that kicks the politically correct snobs square in their arse! Watch these guys as they climb up in the punk ranks. This is a band on the rise. (GG)

Pelado Records 521 W. Wilson #B202 Costa Mesa, CA 92627

Public Nuisance-Cheap Sex and Booze!!!, 7"

Pretty '77 style shit here. It doesn't do much for me, but I must admit it has that kind of catchy thing to it where you can't help but nod your head up and down. Almost embarrassingly catchy. (WD)

Profane Existence

Pulley-Esteem Driven Engine CD

If I were to find out that Epitaph and Fat Wreck Chords have this huge Wizard of Oz-like machine that turns out similar sounding bands like Willy Wonka turns out candy, I wouldn't be surprised in the least. Chalk one more of 'em up for Epitaph. Pulley kinda rocks in a catchy sort of manner that seems all too familiar. You'll be tapping your feet wondering to yourself, "Where have I heard this before?" (BVH)

Epitaph

Purr-Motion CD

A Spanish indy-garage-punk-rock band? Well, it's not much different than anything that's come out of the U.S. In fact they even seem to be singing in English. Nothing too exciting here. (BVH)

Subterfuge Records: PO Box 46055 28080 Madrid Spain

Only an idiot would even listen to this for longer than I have to write this review

Quincy Punx-Stuck on Stupid, 10"

These guys have slowed it down a bit, but their silliness and "fuck everything" attitude remains. They can still make me dance around a little in my chair and sing along. It took a while at first but I'm really warming up to this record. (WD)

Redess

Rabble-Demo

I would give this tape a more in depth review if I could hear a damn thing on it—but my tape player sucks. As it is, it's fast angry punk rock with songs like "You Suck" and "Leper Song." Punk with some cool bass stuff. (BVH)

1140 Petree #134 El Cajon, CA 92020

Rash of Beatings-7"

Thrashy hardcore with a real deathly singer and some pretty awesome metal riffs on the guitar. This is what Apartment 213 always should have sounded like. They also remind me of Avulsion, but more hardcore punk than that. The more I listen the more I like it. Sample titles, "Pig Raped Citizen," "Feast of Sores," "Marching Towards Damnation," and "Reduced to Ashes." This is fucking brutal! (WD)

Sersual Underground Ministries; 1430 S. Quincy Ave.; Tulsa, OK 74120

Real Estate Fraud-Demo

Dorky punk rock muddily recorded and lacking in interest. (BVH)

No Address

Red Aunts-Saltbox, LP

This wins, hands down, as the best packaged record of 1996, which is amazing considering that it's an Epitaph release, which usually have really base packaging and schlocky cover art. This, on the other hand is really nice & understated, with nothing but portraits of the band members & a really beautiful typeface. However, what makes this so great is that you have a choice of 3 covers, all die-cut over the eyes of a Red Aunt, allowing you to see through to the album title! Oh yeah, there's music on here too, huh? Musically, the Red Aunts are one of the only good bands on Epitaph, serving up noisy punchy garage punk with coarse vocals that can be both totally a-tonal and melodious at the same time. The Red Aunts are not just getting bet-

ter over time, but more experimental, throwing in more tempo changes as well as the occasional Hammond organ & lap steel. (DS)

Epitaph 2798 Sunset Blvd. Los Angeles CA 90026

Red Rocket-July LP

Hey, this CD case actually has 3 firecrackers in the little hinge part! That's pretty damn crazy. But I've written enough about clever packaging this issue. This is a surprise for an Excursion release, I thought they were more of a hardcore label, but this is only marginally hardcore, following the recent trend of ex-hardcore people forming more poppy bands, the edge is still there, but it's more catchy. Unfortunately, this ain't Weston, and it ain't the Dillinger Four. It's actually pretty bad, the hooks aren't that great, the singing's pretty strained, and the attempts at 'emotion' seem a bit forced. (DS)

Excursion PO Box 20224 Seattle, WA 98102

Redmond Shooting Stars - 4 song, 7"

It is amazing how Aaron's drumming can influence every band he is in. Sounds like Pinhead Gunpowder with male and female vocals. This is a great seven inch. Every Cometbus, Crimpshrine, Pinhead Gunpowder fan should own it. This is what started the whole pop-punk revolution. It is too bad that it didn't stay this way. (EA)

Broken Rekids PO Box 460402 SF CA, 94146

The Reeky Shanks - The Layman's Guide to the Armageddon, 7"

Mid-tempo pop-punk from Pennsylvania. Nothing over the top but fun. They sound like the weak cousin of the Queers and Screeching Weasel with singer with slightly gruff vocals. On gold vinyl. (MG)

42 Records, 3101 Oxford Valley Rd, Unit #520, Levittown, PA 19057

Registrators - Terminal Boredom, CD

Here it is, punk rock at its finest in 1996. Fourteen songs from Japan's replacement for Teenegenerate. Though not the same (you can understand most of the vocals) up there in the ranks. Remind me a lot of the Stitches, but Japanese. Would be the best release of the year but 14 songs is about 2 too many for me. Highly suggested. While you are at it drive however far as you need to to see these boys when they are in the United States this Fall. So punk it hurts. (EA)

Rip Off; 581 Maple Ave., San Bruno CA 94066

Remington-s/t, 7"

Emo! Emo! Emo! Ala Rye Coalition, this band has the lovely screamed vocals. There really isn't much that can compare to a singer who is able to put all his anger/pain/ passion into his voice. This is damn good. Lo fi, punk based emo core (I created a sub genre!) that doesn't get bogged down with the technical, long instrumentals that so many bands of this genre favor. (JP)

PO Box 397 Westerville, OH 43081

Remission - Our Days Are Numbered LP

No holds barred, two speeds (stop and go), dueling vocalists punk rawk, Negative Approach cover and all. The lyric book is on nice, thick paper and so is the poster that was in there. I wonder why they picked pink for the color of the cover, but what the hey... Not exactly my thing but it is good. (MM)

Beer City Records PO Box 26035 Milwaukee WI 53226-0035

Remission-Fetus the Code, 7"

Good solid hardcore. They've got two singers, and some originality too which is in too short supply in the hardcore scene. They remind me of Civil Disobedience but not as complex, and a little of Default. I was very impressed and will be anxiously awaiting the upcoming LP. (WD)

Power Ground; 1309 South 21 St.; Manitowoc, WI 54220

Republic of Freedom Fighters-s/t LP

Fucking brilliant emocore from Canada. This is one of the best emo records I've heard this year, staying away from the full-on-noise trend that has been happening recently, instead deftly switching between melodic, and crazy, and just plain great. The kind of music that makes you write a review standing up because you can't stop moving. This is a must own. (DS)

Mountain Records PO Box 1172 Huntington NY 11743-0656

Rubbur-Nothing to Say, 7"

This sounds like pop-punk by guys who can play a lot better stuff, but are trying to lower themselves to play this. It just turns out sounding eclectic and not well carried out. They would be a much better at being an alternative band with hot licks. (WD)

Fuzzgun; 440 Memorial #1158; Houston, TX 77007

The Ryders- Zasso, CD

In the bands own words: "Zasso, which means grasses in the wildness, symbolizes people living in their crazy tough lifestyle." How can I criticize someone who lives in the "crazy tough lifestyle?" Who am I to judge. I'm just lil old Greg Gartland



— I probably couldn't understand these Japanese punk rockers, the Ryders. But if I did, I would probably let you know that the Ryders suck, and that they should realize that its time to give up this lame-o GBH/Sham 69 fixation people have. The New Bomb Turks kick both of those bands asses combined! Why don't you try to ape their shit. I'll tell you why — cuz they actually have talent, unlike those British rocking chair farts. (Damn right I'm pissed. Maybe I do live in the "crazy rough lifestyle." Better watch your back.....) (GG) Flipside POB 60790, Pasadena CA 91116

Sarin-s/t 7"

Sarin is a toxic nerve gas. The band, a bad mixture of emo and rock-n-roll, comes close. Nice use of duct tape on the packaging though. (DS)
Immigrant Sun Records PO Box 421 Buffalo NY 14223

Satanic Surfers-Hero of Our Time CD

If I didn't know any better, this band would be on Fat Wreck Chords or Epitaph. Fast, catchy, poppy punk stuff from Sweden—only the drummer sings, kinda like Night Ranger. (BVH)
Theologian Records: PO Box 1070 Hermosa Beach, CA 90254

Saturn's Flea Collar-Monosyllabic, CD

This sucks. Weird, spacey. Only an idiot would even listen to this for longer than I have to write this review. The most annoying record I think I've ever heard. God, please strike them from the face of the earth. (WD)
Alternative Tentacles; POB 419092; San Francisco, CA 94141

Scraper -Built With Hate, 10"

The one thing that characterizes this record is speed. For the most part it's hooky hardcore thrash or pop-punk thrash. This is their debut album from this British. The album doesn't lose steam or get boring even through each song tried to break sound barrier. This recommended and it's on cool blue wax and limited to 500 copies. (MG)
Household Name Records, distrb. by Cargo

Second Hand-Puke and Fall Over, 7"

pretty boring punk stuff here. They go slow, they go fast, they have breaks. But it's all been covered before and I'm just not interested. (WD)
Recess Records

Sex Clark Five - Strum & Drum, CD

Nice pun on the name there. This reminds me of light sixties rock, sort of like the Beatles at times. According to the liner notes, this CD is a comp of Sex Clark Five's releases dating from 1983 to 1991 plus some unreleased tracks. Smooth going down, makes you (lightly) bop your head from side to side. I could picture listening to this with my mom while we sit at the kitchen table reading the paper or something. Nice. (KB)
Records to Russia 1207 Big Cove Rd Huntsville, AL 35801

Shaft / The Nimoyo - split 7-inch

The Nimoyo play decent pop while Shaft are along the lines of emo-pop, with screamed vocals which make them the winner of the two. Actually, Shaft are pretty darn listenable. Worth it for them alone. (bobb)
Chafa Records, 5013 Martin Ave., Austin, TX 78751

Shat-are you choking?, CD

Alterna-rock, oh baby, oh baby. (WD)
Fuse Records

Shyster - "That's My Story And I'm Stickin To it" 7-inch

See Cards in Spokes CD. (bobb)
Off Time Records, PO box 52114, Houston, TX 77052

Six Minute War Madness-CD

Some weird hard rock/punkish stuff from (I think) Spain. It really doesn't do anything for me either way—it doesn't rock and it doesn't suck. Go figure. (BVH)
Blues 11100 Aosta 0165/262909

Slackjaw-A Sinking Ship Loves Company CD

Damn it if I can't get this through to everyone: Slackjaw rocks. This band is one of Portland's most under-appreciated bands and this CD proves it more than ever. Residing more on the poppy/emo side of the punk world, at times almost indie rock-sounding, Slackjaw knows how to write music. They know how to write lyrics. They know how to record it well. And, they know how to rock. From the Jawbreaker-esque "Lump of Coal" to the upbeat "Teri Garr" this is an awesome CD and it should not be overlooked by anyone who appreciates real music. (BVH)
Figurehead; PO Box 9294 Portland, OR 97207

Sluts for Hire - The happiest Band on Earth, CD

Wow. Ten times than I expected from what I have heard. I know that I will get ten emo kids jumping on my back (what is that, 40 or 50 pounds?) but this sounds a lot like Nations of Ulysses. Very powerful, both male and female vocals make this a treasure. Thirteen songs that would make you think of the good side of Flipside. Very clean recording and for once I will say that its better that way. Highly Suggested. (EA)
Flipside, PO Box 60790 Pasadena, CA 91116

Elliot Smith- Speed Trials 7"

Elliot Smith's first release since his watershed LP. This 7" finds Smith in top form, serving up three more hauntingly beautiful songs. Oddly, the weakest song, "Speed Trials", is also the A-side. Buy it for the B side, you get two songs that kick your ass, "Angeles", which is mostly acoustic with very light instrumentation, and "I Don't Think I'm Ever Gonna Figure it Out", an acoustic country-rocker. Obviously Elliot Smith isn't for everyone, but if you would get your head outta your butt you'd realize it's for you. (DS)

Kill Rock Stars 120 NE State Ave #418 Olympia WA 98501

Social Scare-No Government, No War, No Problems, 7"

Your town has one too. A typical hardcore band who writes their name in scraggly letters and throws pictures of cops beating people on everything they do. Nothing special, and nothing that they wish Resist didn't do ten times better than them. (WD)
Room 13; 3505 Kipling; Berkley, MI 48072

Sore Loser/Cedar of Lebanon, split 7"

Sore Loser are alright pop-punk. I must admit I nod my head while listening to it. It reminds of Zoinks, but not as complex or sing-a-long-y. C.O.L. is noisy emo. They have their moments but generally make me grate my teeth. (WD)
Grimlake; PO Box 1888; Clute, TX 77531

I would rather listen to club dance music



Space Cookie - S/T, 7"

Overly distorted guitar, muffled vocal style ala Superchunk. Pretty fast, rock and roll. The reason this description sounds so generic is because although this is really catchy and easy to tap your toes to, it's nothing really outstanding. I might listen to it again but it lacks some sort of spark, I don't know what that is. It's just sort of there. (KB)

Reservation Records / PO Box 7374 / Athens, GA 30604

Space Streakings— 7" Comic Book Single Deluxe

One of those completely psychotic Japanese noise core bands (Zeni Geva, Boredoms, etc.) who specialize in aural nuttiness. Kinda like early Butthole Surfers, only sped up, and with weirder effects. Will cause seizures, which can be a good thing. (DC)

Skin Graft Records, PO Box 257546, Chicago IL 60625

Sparkler- Discover, 7"

Discover what? That Sparkler are the type of band that belong on MTV so the stupid "alternative" kids can suck their asses while they play their uninspired Lemonheads-esque music? This alterna-rock trend is wearing thin. I would rather listen to club dance music than hear another regurgitation of the one song that every alterna band is copying. Blah. (JP)

Tim/Kerr Records POB 42423 Portland, Or 97242

SpiderBabies - Web of Hate, LP

The SpiderBabies debut (?) LP is a darn fine record. I would have put this is the top ten of the year except the vocals are too fake distorted. Rides along the lines of a nine-pound hammer or New Bomb Turks. Great packaging. This band will be a big stir real soon. Watch out! (EA)

Frissee Records, PO Box 130 Ardsley, NY 10502

Squidboy- Kids Talk To Killers, CD

Sure, it's all pretty and nice and melodic, but all I can say is eh. This didn't move me and it didn't hurt. Over a whole CD, the emo-pop thing gets boring. The only band that it worked for was Jawbreaker and well, you see where they are now. (JP)

Allied PO Box 460683 SF, Ca 94146

The Stains - Songs for Swinging Losers, CD

Another day, another Dojo CD. The difference being, this one rocks! This CD is friggin' awesome. Actually, its a double CD thang, and it is awesome. I recommend it highly to the Rancid set — it sort of carries that kind of feel while still retaining a very British flavor. This release is excellent, seek it out. (GG)

Dojo Limited

Stapled Shut - 7"

How does Will do it? He keeps putting out, totally excellent releases... I didn't like earlier Stapled Shut I had heard, this stuff is amazing! Eleven offerings of ultra fast, power violence style hardcore. Awesome. (MM)

Clean Plate Records PO Box 0709 Hampshire College, Amherst MA 01002

Starlight Conspiracy - 7"

Wow... simply amazing. Wall of noise guitars with a wonderful, melodic female voice singing over it. The a-side is fast and moving, the b-side is slower but equally moving. This record shocked the hell out of me. Really good... only two songs however. I've said it before, that trend disturbs me. (MM)

Catapult Records 215 A Street, 6th fl Boston, MA 02210

Steel Miners - Dig, 10"

The Steel Miners are another powerhouse. I got a CD EP thing awhile back that had some major label connection form these boys, if anyone can clear that up I would appreciate. Otherwise the Pennsylvania state has got something in the water working. One of the few Get Hip release that means anything anymore. (EA)

Get Hip PO Box 666 Canonsburg, PA 15317

Stink- New World Odor, CD

Can you get any cheesier than that title? This is one of those CDs that starts out ok- fast guitar, typical pop punk. A few songs in, the whole thing starts to get old and the vocals start to stand out awkwardly against the music and it all starts to sound like one REALLY long song. It's not bad, I just think some variation and tempo changes would have helped a lot. (JP)

Allied PO Box 460683 SF, CA 94146

Strictly Ballroom-7"

Terrible emo music that obviously thinks it's clever but really isn't and the singer sounds like a whining 4 year old. Suck. (WD)

I am an idiot for putting this out Records; POB 43; Santa Monica, CA 90406

The Strike/Dillinger Four- The Rebel's Choice Split 7"

The Strike. The Dillinger Four. One 7". Does anything more really need to be said? Buy or die, baby, buy or die. (DS)

Doing it for the Kids 2020 Seabury Ave Minneapolis MN 55406

Submission Hold - Garlic for Victory 7"

I didn't like the SH record I got last time, I don't know why Eric would think I might this one...

While this effort is less like Spitboy than the aforementioned release, I still don't like it.

Musically, it goes from jangley acoustic to wild, chaotic hardcore usually in the same song.

Lyricaly, Submission Hold advocates self autonomy, free thinking, etc... As before I got tons of goodies... sticker, poster, and more. (MM)

Hopscotch Records PO Box 1143 Cardiff, CA 92007

Swing Swang Swung, 7"

It sounds like bad funk mixed with Phish or something to me and I just can't believe it. All instrumental and in need of SERIOUS help. BLUCK! (WD)

5665 Knight Road; Bellingham, WA 98226

Talulah Gosh — Backwash, CD

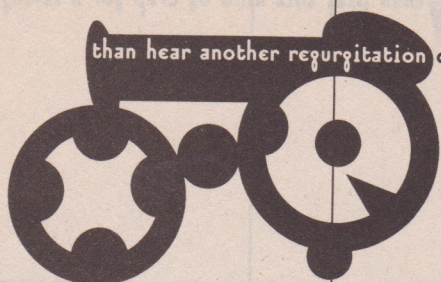
A long-gone London band from 1986-88, Talulah Gosh perfected the "shambling" pop style, which is related to punk-pop, with the aggression taken out. Catchy tunes, harmonies, lo-fi production — so it's quite appropriate that it appears on K Records. An excellent album, kind of like the Vaselines, except even more delicate, and kind of like the Raincoats, except sweeter, with chiming guitars. Sort of like and English Let's Active. Music to soothe the savage beast, and very reminiscent of what a lot of bands are trying to do today, with somewhat more limited success. Recommended for pop lovers. (DC)

K Records, Box 7154, Olympia WA 98507

Tark 18, 7"

Pretty cool standard drunk punk hardcore. Better than most though. Kind of reminds me of Resist and has some pretty cool stuff going. One or two songs get on my nerves, but I think they're headed in the right direction. Definitely worth checking out. (WD)

Passive Fist; PO Box 9313; Savannah, GA 31412



than hear another regurgitation of the one song that every alterna band is copying

Thee Hydrogen Terrors 7-inch

Indiscernible vocals over repetitive guitar/drum rhythms. Throw in the high-pitched wail of a trumpet and you get a two-song 45 from the noise tradition. (bobc)
Super-8 Records, PO box 4023, Boston, MA 02161

Thrill My Wife CD single

Pop-flavored punk from The Dickies tradition. The song about pogs was pretty dumb; otherwise, this is a good effort. (bobc)
1541 N. Laurel Ave., Suite 206, Hollywood, CA 90046

Tinkle - "Rejected" CD

The winner of the month. I didn't want to like this simply because of the horrible glut of increasingly shitty pop-punk bands out there, but these guys stand out from the herd quite nicely. One obvious complaint: their influences are a bit too noticeable, but with more saturation (and a better name) these guys could become a strong contribution to the pop world. Keep it up, or however you keep it. (bobc)
Suite 289, 4410 Mass Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20016

Tito O' Tito Band - Fishsticks, 7"

Fast, yet funky. Vocal, yet filled with a primal scream like no other. If you are looking for something above and beyond the "norm," well then enjoy the search, my friend. Because herein lay distortion, a few chords, and driving beats. (MD)
I am a Idiot; PO Box 43 Santa Monica, ca 90406

Total Failure-Use Your Head, CD

I've gotta tell you I hate CD's in 7" packing, I think it sucks. Anyways, it's hardcore. There's some discharge influence. There's a little moshy breakdown at times. It's nothing special and certainly nothing I want to listen to. (WD)
H:G Fact; 401 Hongo-M; 2-36-2 Yayoi-Cho, Nakano, Tokyo, 164, JAPAN

Trauma-s/t 7"

I'm pretty sure that this features some ex-Gauge people, although don't quote me on that. It's definitely in the Gauge vein though. Nice tempo changes, good noise parts, good clean parts. But overall, it leaves me flat. (DS)
Caulfield Records PO Box 84323 Lincoln NE 68501

The Trans Megetti-Rent a Rocket 7"

Get caught up in the blur of this sonic swirl. These boys know how to rock & roll, and when they start they don't stop. Serving up three souped-up rockers on this wax. Take 20 Dextrim, feel your heart pound, put this 7" on and dance around your bedroom like the crazy motherfucker you are. (DS)
Art Monk Construction PO Box 6332 Falls Church VA 22040

Trial - Through the Darkest Days 7"

The music here is that standard sXe style in the vein of bands like Manliftingbanner, Insted and countless others, fast, chunky, and some stop/start parts. While the music is not particularly groundbreaking, there is a sense of sincerity that comes through, especially if you see them play live. They proclaim they're doing it "for the kids" and I believe it. (MM)
CrimeThInc. Records 2695 Rangewood Drive Atlanta, GA 30345

Ultrabreakfast — s/t, 7"

"I want to meet all the guys in superchunk" these guys sing in "Wishlist," and it's clear that they have their indie rock references in the right place. An excellent 7", both funny and tuneful, in that twisted college rock way that Pavement perfected a few years back. Highly recommended. (DC)
Catapult Records, 215 A Street, 6th Floor, Boston, MA 02210

The Unseen-Raise your finger, Raise your fist, 7"

How generic can hardcore get. Yeah they got leather jackets, yeah they got mohawks, yeh they hate America, yeh they're D.I.Y., yeah they're boring as shit. "Fuck that punk rock clone...go ahead leave me alone" they say, somehow I know exactly what they mean... (WD)
VML; POB 183; Franklin Park, IL 60131

Ups! - S/T, 10"

Boring surf from Italy. (EA)
Caterina Canale -via crsica, 6-56126, pisa, italia

The Valentine Six — 7"

Like some freakish jazz-noir soundtrack from a twisted Dashiell Hammett novel, these guys sound like John Zorn's Naked City; all jazzy propulsion, with spoken atmospherics, like Stan Ridgeway, though with true evil in his heart. Extremely cool—if you like something interesting and different, buy this. (DC)
V6Records/PCP Records

The Valentine Six - I Saw a Ghost Face b/w Always is My Name, 7"

Sometimes I wonder where people get their mailing lists from. This record is jazz stuff with a sax, drummer, piano, guitar, bass, and vocalist. I'm not sure what the specific name for this kind of music is but this sucks. It reminds of me of the kind of music in the Fabulous Baker Boys with a full band (with a saxophone) instead of piano's. (MG)
V6 Records

The Van Pelt-Stealing from our Favorite Thieves, CD

I really wanted to hear this because I know a couple big x-cool-emo-band-members were in it. It's kinda slow and boring. The vocals really get annoying to me after a while, but I should note that I feel it has some really nice, beautiful points, but overall I don't think I'll listen to it very often, if ever. (WD)
Gem Blandsten

Vent-7"

Heavy, slow, burgeoning hardcore from Kentucky. The vocals remind me of B'last or Integrity while the music fails to sway me either way. Not bad. Free with issue 3 of No Labels Zine. (BVH)
1148 Fifth Ave. #7D New York, NY 10128

Voodoo Love Mint/Alien Harvest, split 7"

The packaging is the best part by far. There's a neat cut out, a crazy fold-over. It looks great! As for the sound...Alien Harvest is a pretty neat noisy pop band with some special something that makes 'em pretty dang special. Voodoo Love Mint is easy to get on my nerves though with silly (sounds like they should be reading bad poetry over it) music. And the singer can't sing! The 2nd song is better, but not really. More like less annoying. I'd listen before purchasing. (WD)
Erosion records; 314 N. 8; Manitowoc, WI 54220

The VSS-21:51, CD

A pretty emo thing right here. Driving though more straight forward and full/noisy sounding than most though. I'm really surprised that they apparently did a gravity 7 because they don't strike me as that kind of noisy band. pretty average pace, heck, pretty average songs. Nothing real memorable, and the CD is just their 7"s (3 of 'em) re-released. (WD)
I see no evidence of a record label on the packaging. brainy.

I think I'd rather die than play this kind of crap for a living



Wheeljack/Year Zero- split 7"

Great cover with a match actually glued to the cover. Very nice packaging. I find wheeljack annoying like a cross of alternarock and circus music. Year Zero is kinda like noisy indie rock. Pretty looking, but pretty lame. (WD)

Terminus Records; 885 Briarcliff Rd. Apt. #13; Atlanta, GA 30309

White Trash Debutantes - My Guy's Name is Rudolph 7"

Who... these guys are really bored. (MM)
206 Records 8314 Greenwood Ave. N., suite
102 Seattle WA 98103

White Trash Debutantes-Its Raw, But You Live For It LP

Hi, we dress in drag and sing annoying punk songs & covers, and there's something that just doesn't sit right with this whole damn album. Fuck it. (DS)

206 Records 8314 Greenwood Ave North Suite
102 Seattle WA 98103

Wife Beater -Bad Reputation, 7" EP

I was disappointed with Wife Beater on their last 7" (a split) but this new 7" is better. It's total snot nosed punk rock like a hardcore Dwarves. However, my only complaint is that the production sucks! They would benefit from a better recording. The songs are good enough to shine through the lack of production and this is a 7" to pick up and a band to look for. (MG)

Obnoxious Records, 26 Sherwood Circle,
Manchester, CT 06040

The Witch Babies-Demo

I'm going to subscribe to Ben Weasel's theory about bands not releasing stuff or playing shows until they are ready. Lose the boom box recording. Is that a trumpet I hear? (BVH)

PO Box 71247 Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Woodenhorse-Product, CD

Kinda noisy pop. They sound like they're good, but they're just not. Picture Fugazi being really annoying. BINGO! (WD)

Ghostmeat; POB 54693; Atlanta, GA 30308

Wormbath - Ornamental Horticulture, 7"

See Lipmonger 7-inch. These guys are more snotty and have less Screeching Weasel in them. Actually, they're much better than Lipmonger for these reasons. (bobe)

675 Washington St., Royersford, PA 19468

The Wretched Ones - Go to Work CD

This strikes me as older guys who have liked punk rock for a long time doing their thing... I'm sure they're having fun, but there's nothing outstanding about this at all. Drunk punk lyrics set to generic punkish rock. (MM)

Headache; PO Box 204 Midland Park, NJ 07432

Wristrockets - Humans are Stupid, CD

Poppy, poppy, pop. On the cover the Wristrockets have Misfits shirts, and a greaser look. I was thinking rock-n-roll. Now the pop bands have invaded others looks as well. Not bad, I just can't take anymore of this Queens rip off stuff. You don't have to be original but you don't need to put out a short 8 song CD with nothing really to offer. (EA)

Lucky 13 Records, PO Box 40353 Eugene, OR 97404

Young Pioneers-s/t 7"

Yowza. Two songs, one too short and novel to really count as anything. So it's really one song. Good thing it's a damn good song. Actually it's probably the best song I've heard from the Young Pioneers, the country-rock outfit born from the ashes of Born Against. But still, it's only ONE SONG. (DS)

Whirled Records PO Box 5431 Richmond VA 23220

Your Mom-Left in LA, 7"

Grunge-rock. It sounds whiney. It's too late to cash in on this shit, so why do they even bother. I think I'd rather die than play this kind of crap for a living. It blows. (WD)

Vagrant; 2118 Wilshire Blvd. #361; Santa Monica, CA 90403

ZAO - All Else Failed, CD

This awful Christain heavy metal with a vocalist that growls the salvation of the lord instead off "666 the number of the beast." The entire band thanks Jesus Christ and his cohorts (God) and that should give you a pretty good idea of the message they are trying to convey. (MG)

ZAO, 1215 20th Street, Parkersburg, WV 26101

V/A - Anarchy in the UK, CD

This is a Dojo reissue of a comp that reads like a who's who of bands from the great oppressor and its most oppressed nations. Names like the Exploited, the Damned, the UK Subs (pre Lars Frederiksen, as the liner notes gleefully exclaim), the Adicts, the great Stiff Little Fingers. That pretty much explains it I think....(GG)

Dojo Limited

V/A - Axhandle Punk Compilation, CD

So, is the compilation punk or just of punk bands....? Anyway, I worked construction over the summer, and I know all about tools. My favorites are Hiltis, especially the hand grinder. That thing was so compact it could hide in little crevices and find the spot to cut with ease. Core boars are cool to, but aren't used nearly as much as the grinder. Or axhandles for that matter. We broke sledgehammers all the time and always were replacing the handles. You'll have to excuse my reminiscence here, it just brought me back you know? As for this CD, it goes from good to bad to worse. Squat is good, with female vocals that are rad. I liked Hickey too. They reminded me of Gaunt which was cool. I hated the Mcrackins, Cash Registers, and even (yes its true!) The Blanks 77 song. That was boring! Whatever, forget axhandles, give me a grinder comp! That would rule. There probably aren't enough good bands for it though. That would be a problem....(GG)

Axhandle Records

V/A - Better Read than Dead, CD

Well, lets see we got CIV, NOFX, Napalm Death, J Church and Spazz all on one CD. I guess if you want to hear a bunch of songs you have heard before or throwaway tracks than this is for you. Not a very great collection, but diverse and a good cause. These bands donated the songs for AK Press. I am sure that Epitaph couldn't help them in any other way besides putting out a sub-par CD benefit. (EA)

Epitaph 2798 Sunset Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90026

V/A - Bored Generation, CD

I am not even going to say a word: Pennywise, Offspring, Daredevils, Souls of Mischief, Rancid, Helmet, Beastie Boys, NOFX, Casual and Primus. The soundtrack for a frat house. Includes a CD Rom portion where you can watch Snowboarding, Skateboarding and surfing to your favorite bands. This one would have been way too easy to tear apart, Primus. (EA)

Epitaph 2798 Sunset Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90026

V/A Chameleon Fetish Presents Perverts, Freaks and Weirdos, Vol 1, CD

A metal band starts it all off, and that's a bad start. Then there are some bland ska-type bands, some garage-punk and some oi-punk to fill it out. It's really hard to listen to this because it shifts in and out of vastly different styles and, to be honest, none of them are very special. (JP)

PO Box 7333 Ann Arbor, MI 48107

V/A - Emo Schmeemo 7"

Offerings from the likes of Gila Blend, Orwell, Cicno de Gatos, and Braid. They all have that emo-esque (post-emo maybe?) Illinois sound. An excellent primer for the uninitiated. (MM)

Liberty Park Recordings 3911 Williams Downers Grove IL 60515

V/A - The Excursion Compilation CD

This is nifty little compilation put together to help expose people to a nifty little record label. There is some good stuff on here... Serpico (formerly Sleeper) and Undertow are the big bands but there are lots of others worth noting. Bands like Trial, Ten-O-Seven, Lit, and State Route 522 all put forth more than worthy performances. The comp is half pop, half hardcore and well worth the cheap price. (MM)

Excursion PO Box 20224 Seattle, WA 98102

V/A - For a Few Crash Helmets More, CD

Strange compilation, but pretty good. Has lots of stuff, from melodic punk to hard core, but mainly stays with the British styled stuff. I like it a lot. Its eclectic and cool.

Cargo Records

V/A Forecast: Red Rocket, Artless Motives, State Route 522, Whatever CD

Four bands that are "okay." Judge for yourself. (MD)
Excursion, PO Box 20224, Seattle, WA, 98102

V/A - The "F#IK You Larry!" Compilation, CD

The cover says this the "Alternative to the alternative." Yeah right! This encompasses the alternative. Featuring some heavy metal, rap/hip-hop, ska, RATM type metal/hardcore, ska, hard alterna/industrial rock, a little hardcore and punk. Overall this compilation is terrible. All this bands wouldn't even be the best in their respective genres and the compilation doesn't mesh well together. Even the good bands on here like Warsaw, The Stains, Dave's Big Deluxe, and the Generiks aren't good enough to pull this compilation up. (MG)

Scorched Earth Records

V/A-Localism LP

This is a compilation of bands from the Oxnard, California Area. A comp like this is much more interesting on ethnographic levels than musical. The music on here is so incredibly varied, ranging from super lo-fi drunk punk to full on reverb-out-the-ass straight-edge. What's fascinating is that a place like Oxnard, California can support such diversity in a scene. (DS)

PO Box 6326 Oxnard, CA 93031-6326

V/A - Mississippi Sounds, CD

A lame compilation that features boring alterna-rock and pop bands. This compilation showcases the collage rock spectrum more than the punk and hardcore scene. (MG)
Eyes in the Woods Records

V/A- On Guard For Thee, CD

Some better known Canadian names appear on this comp of "Canadian Youth Gone Bad", including Cub, Smugglers, Huevos Rancheros, and McRackins. As one would expect, they give up some strong songs.

Others that stand out of this almost 100% good comp are Stand Gt, Pussy Monster, and Bum. This beats and all US pop punk. You want it. Lookout!, beware! (JP)

AUGOGO GPO Box 542D Melbourne, Vic 3001 Australia

V/A-Regresoasamoa un Humenajea Angry Samoans 7"

From what I can figure out, it's a Spanish release of bands covering Angry Samoans songs. Does the world need it? I'm not sure. (DS)

Punch Records APDO 60167 28080 Madrid

V/A-Sabotage the Square, CS

A very bizarre comp tape here. You know the kind that has all types of genres on it to please everyone, but really pleases no one in the end. Ska, weird country, pop; and they're all live (with a very good recording mind you). Just so you get an idea: Wat Tyler, Burnside, New Speakers, The Damned, Snuff, Doo the Moog, Tofu Love Frogs (best name by far...), Smog UK, Bender, Wardance, Travis Cut. Shit I can't even find the bands I DO like by fastforwarding, definitely annoying. (WD)

Kollusion Records; PO Box 2717; Harlow; Essex; CM18 6SQ

V/A - Santa Cruz Sucks , CD

22 Santa Cruz (and surrounding areas?) bands here.

Standouts include The What Nots (dual sex vocals with almost caustic sounding harmonies) and Gorehounds ("I can eat bagels everyday". Sounds All-ish at times). I guess this is a pretty good sampler in terms of variety but very little of it appealed to me. Some randomly picked bands names from the comp: Lost Cause, Vessel, Witchhook Sky, The Muggs, Soda Pop, X-girl, Black Label. This is for a good cause though (40% of profits go to local youth charities). (KB)

Bad Monkey Records 343 Soquel Ave. #311 / Santa Cruz, CA 95062

V/A - Sides 1-4 an AC/DC tribute, 2x7"

Shellac's version of Jailbreak make this 2X7" worth the price of admission. Big'n are too metal and can be forgotten. Brise-Glace has a similar sound to Shellac and do an instro that is a fine venture. Finally U.S. Maple, whose noisy sound can easily be forgotten. This would have made a better 2 song 7". Of course you get a fine Skin Graft comic as well. (EA)

Skin Graft PO Box 257546, Chicago, IL 60625

V/A - The Spandex Experiment, CD

I wonder how this idea started. "I know how about a couple bigger punk bands, and some smaller ones doing lame glam-metal bands!" You got Snuka doing Ratt, Weston doing Bon Jovi, Pet Ufo doing Van Halen, Walleye doing Ozzy Osborne. In most cases the original was better. If you liked these bands in the eighties then I guess this might be fun for you. I was left feeling like I really wasted a bunch of my time. (EA)

Double Duece; PO Box 515, NY, NY 10159

V/A-Victims of Hate and Violence, 2 x 7"

My favorite thing about this record is its cover. Very nice, kinda confusing at first, but just plain awesome. The bands make it overall pretty generic though, nothing really tickled my fancy. Although I did like the Pinhead Circus track (of course! I love em!) I could live without though. Here's the lineup: The Krayons, Manchurian Candidates, Fuckface, No Fraud, Ignorance Park, Andon, Pinhead Circus, and Sweet Daddy. (WD)

Big City Bastard; 6501 B Chesterfield Ave.; Austin, TX 78752

V/A We Bastard Motherfuckers, CD

We have a varied comp here. I'm in love with Merry Go Round-really nice pop with an 80's new wave feel to it. I wish these girls had an entire CD. Otherwise, the CD is standard Euro-core, some metal-tinged punk and a few Propagandhi copycats (which are all pretty good). Dead Ducks, NIA and Wicked Apricots all make strong showings worth mention. It's also nice to hear some of the bands singing in their native language. (JP)

No Address



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Help Wanted

Hey everyone, Punk Planet wants you to become a writer

for us. We want you so badly, we're willing to pay for it. Yep, you read that correctly. Starting immediatly, Punk Planet will be paying for all its content. What does that mean for you? Two things. One, it means that you're going to have a higher-caliber publication (no more Lifetime-style interviews, if you know what I'm sayin') bleeding out onto your sweaty palms. It also means that if you've got the stuff, you could be making some dough. So what do you need to do? First off, get in contact with us at: (773) 227-6114 and let us know what you're interested in writing about: what types of bands you'd like to interview, what topics you'd like to write an article about, whatever. Then send us some samples of stuff you have written, along with a phone number where we can get ahold of you. Then, if we think you've got what it takes, we'll let you know! Exciting, huh? Your name in lights and your wallet full (or at least a little fuller). This is the stuff dreams are made of, baby.

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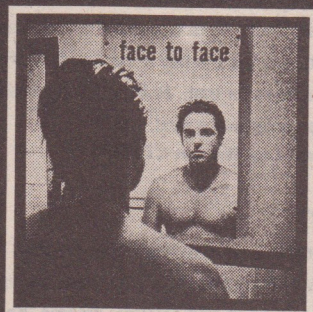
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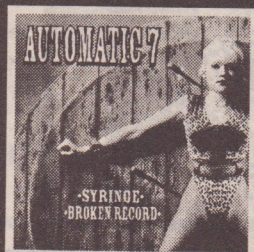
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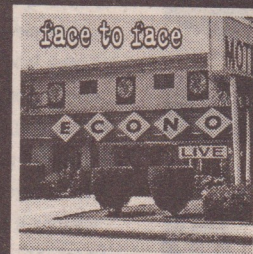
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Fanzine Reviews

More reviews, less reviewers. You do the math. It all looks like fun, but we're dying

up here!

This issue's reviewers:

Bret Van Horn (BVH),

Brian Czarnik (BC),

Kim Bae (KB), Will

Dandy (WD), Lani

Merritt (LM), Eric

Action (EA), Jim Testa

(JT), Dan Sinker (DS)

A Boy and His #4

Love. Love Lost. Love never formed. Are you beginning to understand? This personal/emo zine explores the complexities of love, usually from the negative perspective of being unable to attain the ultimate goal of total companionship with another. I didn't really appreciate the poetry, but the writing was very passionate and reminiscent of that ceaseless desire we have all experienced at one time or another. (LM)

\$1; Doug; PO Box 1138; Notre Dame, IN 46556

Aneurysm Fanzine #9

Reviews, columns, interviews (with Rev. Norb, Lifetime, Instil, Screw 32). Been there, done that. (DS)

3 Kendal Ct. Marlton NJ 08053

Blink #12

Most of this looks pretty nice and it seems very art-oriented - a positive aspect in my book. Interviews w/The Jesus Lizard (that contains the exact same story about the Huns as in the 1st interview I ever read with them in a zine called Untitled from about 5-6 years ago), Red Red Meat, The Lee Harvey Oswald Band, and Trans Am that range from horrible to pretty decent, an awful juvenile piece called "Shrink Talk" (a "warped" advice giving session), and a somewhat disturbing fashion spread called "Wearing it Blink

Style" (no, it wasn't a joke). I enjoyed some of the short stories and interviews but the rest was either stupid or mediocre. (KB)

\$22 / PO Box 823 / Miami, FL 33243-0823

Bosch

I just love travel zines. I guess I stay at home too much, anyway reading about other peoples (mis)adventures is more funny, probably safer too! And travel story zines are better than hearing it from a friend, cause you get to skip the dull parts! It's good stuff. (LM)

\$1/trade; Dan; POB 43141; Tucson, AZ 85733

Breakout #2

The enthusiasm in this zine is pretty refreshing. The gangsta lingo is a little annoying but I guess that's the new craze in the SxE scene nowadays (if the SxE zines I've seen in the past year are representative of the scene). The majority of this zine is composed of interviews which are pretty good (unless the interviewee is really boring or mildly offensive like the guy from Setback who writes songs in part about "fucked-up bitches") with 25 Ta Life, Sick of It All, Setback, Screw 32, Hoods, Machine Head, and One For One. There are no articles, just the interviews and some scene reports. Just a minor suggestion: in band interviews, tell the readers the names of the members, what they do, and who you're actually interviewing. It's nice to know. (KB)

\$3 / 2018 Shattuck Ave. #19 / Berkeley, CA 94704

Burnt Hair and Brussel Sprouts #1

Heidi from the gigantic metropolis of Alfred, Maine gives us her first solo try at the zine world. Shit/ hit lists, rants and raves lots of clippings etc... round out this little quick reading zine. Printing cost must be high in Maine 'cause you gotta shell out two clams for this here zine. (BC)

2.00; H.Roy RR1 Box 261A, Alfred, ME. 04002

Cactus Amongus #2

The best thing about this digest-sized zine is the photo of the punk barfing on the cover. Once you get inside, it's a lot of messy, mostly hand-lettered punk-age - reviews, a story about working a crappy bus-boy job, tour diaries, and so on. I understand the editors are pretty young and probably don't have a ton of money to spend on this thing, but the poor photocopying and scribbly handwriting made most of this a chore to read. (J.T.)

PO Box 43141, Tucson AZ 85733, \$1

Change Zine #8

Toughguy Pat West tosses up yet another issue of Change. It an ugly motherfucker, that's for sure. Hake has a column here, which seems incredibly out of place (it's a mans, mans, mans world). Interviews with Kiss It Goodbye, Pist, Seven Years War, and the Voorhees. Plus a free 7" with Today is the Day & the Automatic Few (see record reviews for that). Nothing groundbreaking, but always an entertaining read. (DS)

\$2; 9 Birchwood Lane Westport CT 06880

Cherry #7

An interesting zine with an interesting story on large stores like Wal-Mart and the such. There are tips on

silk-screening, a nice commentary on Religion and celebrity dreams. Kate was worried if her zine measured up to anyone else's. I think Kate does a great job in making her ideas interesting enough for others to read, which is what it's all about. (BC)

\$1.00 Kate PO Box 331, Dresher, PA. 19025

Chicken Scratch #1

I've seen it all before. (DS)

\$1 + 2 stamps; 104 Ashtree Ct. Apex, NC 27502

Chumpzine #69-71

This is a little often annoying but worth one sitting on the toilet zine. It is one - two pages and reviews releases and bands. Normally mixed in the stuffed typ-



ing is some thoughts as well. Worth a stamp, kinda like a peep show with only one quarter in your pocket. (EA)
One Stamp, PO Box 680 Conneaut Lake, PA 16316

Ciudad De Diablos #1

The most unnerving personal zine I've ever read, CDD chronicles the dysfunctional family life and a failed suicide attempt (and subsequent hospitalization) of one Danny Pinzon, a Mexican-American punk rocker. This zine is a desperate cry for help; Danny is both self-hating ("what follows is a day in the life of a suicidal mother/grandmother dominated boring motherfucker") and self-pitying, but since he ends with a promise for a second issue, we can only hope he is still around to read this and write about his life and find a better solution for his problems than a bottle full of sleeping pills. (J.T.)
1589D Sebastopol Rd., Santa Rosa CA 95407, \$1 + 2 stamps

Cleared For Takeoff #3

One Million power points for the cover shot of Carol channing. Inside are top ten things in Boise. (yes, Boise) Lots of clippings, cool pictures, and a great deal of the zine is about local happenings and people. The local boys, Vermin, do a nice interview here as well. (BC)
\$= Luc Durocher 3065 N. Mtn road. Boise, ID 83702

Crackpot #2

Another zine plagued by way too many reviews and interviews and not enough personal opinions (the reason for making a little zine in the first place I would think...). Even then the personal opinions are just: punk rock, selling out, and mostly shit that we've all heard before and are really tired of hearing about. Oh yeh, it's ska oriented, the interviews are with Less than Jake and Mephiskapheles. PASS. (WD)
stamps; Crackpot; 92 N Cheesebrush Ave; Tucson, AZ 85748

Creepy Mike's Omnibus of Fun 3#

These mini-comic style zines are getting' better all the time! This well put together zine has interviews with Jaina (Flatter), and James (James Kochalka Superstar.) 12 interesting questions to the boys in the Melvins, and loads of other interesting stuff revolving around 70's toys and games. Mucho interesting! (BC)
\$2.00; Mike Ruspantini P.O. Box 983 Buffalo, N.Y. 14213-0983

Cutthroat Comics #3

Imagine your favorite comic... clever dialogue, intriguing premise, intricate artwork... all in all the epitome of comic creativity. Got that in your head? Cutthroat Comics is the downfall of that dream... this stuff is just expensive shit. (LM)
\$3; c/o Apocalypse No!; Box 345; Putney, VT 05346

Deeper than Inside

This issue has great poets pinned up against punk bands lyrics in a no holds barred of street fighting poetry. Well, kind of. Lots of poetry, and even though I am currently in love, much of the mumble jumble doesn't appeal to me. Maybe I am not cultured enough. (BC)
\$= amanda Conroy 34 Matthews St. Sunshine 3020 Victoria

Defecation#4/Hooked on Phallus #1

A couple zines about hanging out and traveling while being drunk. Actually it's a lot more fun than it sounds. I was smiling most of the time I read it. Place this

under humor. My favorite part though is this quote, "How can you actually think that wanting to blow up all the cars in the world and being against bombs is a contradiction?" Followed by my 2nd fave, "I don't think Jeff is against explosions." . Quite a fun read. (WD)

\$1; Brendan Sheridan, Amcongen Hong Kong; PSC 464 Box 30; FPO AP 96522; USA

Drop Out #4

A beautifully laid out travelogue zine. Unfortunately, the writing didn't grab me as much as the overall design of the 'zine. It also comes with a ton of random brochures & flyers from his travels. (DS)

\$2.50; PO Box 411341 San Francisco CA 94141-1341

EggTooth #1

A pretty rote zine whose heart is in the right place, but follow through lacks oomph. Articles about traveling, an intelligent article about corporate ownership of the media, and other things. Oddly, the guy that made this could have made an incredible zine if he had written about his job: he's in the military (just check out that address). I'd really like to know about that, not where to eat for cheap in San Diego! (DS)

Karl Koons USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) Oz Div FPO AP 96634-2770

Ennoying Crack #1

This is an amazingly well written zine on bicycles yet is not about bicycles. To be uninformed or unfamiliar with bikes (like myself) is irrelevant, I found myself relating to the stories and opinions within. It's just really redeeming when the theme of a zine can promote the common human element that we can all understand. The layout and design of the zine is very clean and creative. Extremely worthwhile so get it now! (LM)

\$2everywhere; Tom @ Kranenborekdaan 19; 8930 Lauwe, BELGIUM

Flashing Astonisher #4

So this is the girlfriends are yucky issue. Great idea. I could have give you some numbers if you do a "girlfriends are psycho" issue. Anyhow, this here zine has a little of everything in it. It is good but really short. Maybe the guys should forget about girls and sit down and write a longer zine next time. (BC)

2 stamps Flashing Astonisher 113 Fleetwood Ln. Minoa, N.Y. 13116

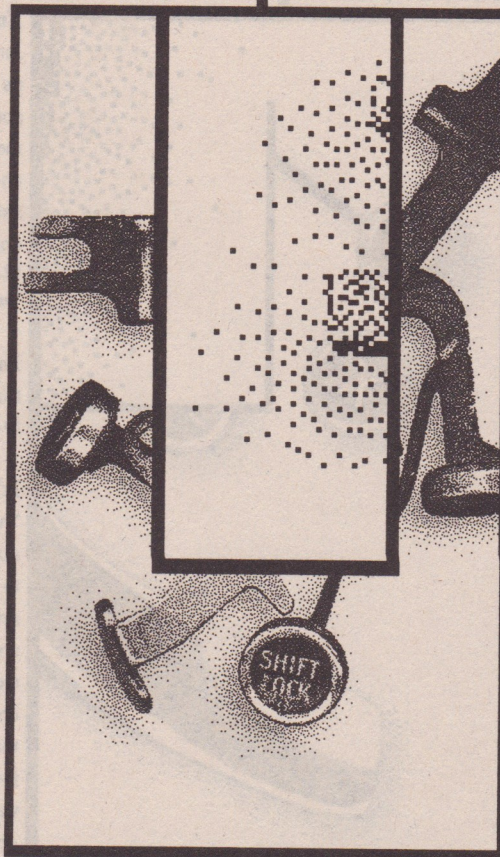
Formerly Known As-#12

Congratulations to Jason and Roy for making it a full year. FKA has come out pretty damn predictably from month to month and the First Anniversary Issue is no exception. Brimming with tons of strong writing, this issue shows us a glimpse of what is in store for the years to come. With stories like "Who is Brenda Ferguson?," "A Part of Us," and the usual FKA stuff, Jason and Roy show that a good zine keeps at it—not because they want to, but because they have to. Keep it up. (BVH)

C/O Jason Jones: 2984 Crestline Drive, Macon, GA 31204

Fuzzyheads are Better #4

Patti does one of the cutest little zines around. Centered around layout this issue has interviews with the creator of eight ball, J-Church and more. The best part of FHAB is that you leave each issue feeling that you



learned a lot about not only Patti but yourself. It is fun, cute and luckily isn't all reviews. Thumbs up to an interviewer that asks good questions. Send your dollar and something else, like a mixed tape. I owe you one Patti, Eric. (EA)

\$1.00; PO Box 68568 360 A Bloor St. W, Toronto, ON M5S 1X1 CANADA

Get Lost #4.5 parts 1-3

This is a great little zine (zines?) written by Josh in a very warm personal style. Reading this is like chatting with a close friend who has been away for awhile. The tiny sine (4.25" x 5.5") is great and part 3 has a really cool folding thing going on (I love crazy stuff like that). Hell, I would recommend trying to get your hands on some back issues as well, if you dig genuinely good (not sappy) perzines. (LM)

Trilogy for \$1; John F. Pugh; PO Box 250972; Little Rock, ARK 72225

Greedy Bastard #13

The most funny zine in the world. Bill has been doing this for awhile now. With a new computer the look changes slightly but the content remains the same. A Candysnatcher's interview with great questions. A piece on squeegee punks that is down right hilarious. Pomo and the Stallions plus pecker galore. Genius and worth the money. (EA)

PO Box 1014 Yonkers, NY 10704

Green Means Go! #4

Lots and lots of reviews of records and such. This fucker is thick and appeals to the garage punk folks. I dug this zine because what it lacks in creativity it fills with a lot for the buck. Great interview with the often overlooked 1-4-5's and more. Try this one. (EA)

\$1.00 + 2 Stamps Green Means Go! PO Box 6278 Hoboken, NJ 07030

Grundig #2

Dual authors grind it out in a travel zine that is written in a personal Cometbus-like-vien. Oh yes my friends, it's grundig, out with their second release that smokes with cool comix, helpful train hoppin' hints. Hitch hiker stories, people places, and happy faces. This was definitely the best zine in my pile an I hope I can find the first one somewhere. (LM)

\$1 and two stamps; 1725 SE 49th Portland, OR 97215

Gullible #8

Chris does a nice handwritten style zine here. Covered is your basic punk stuff. Some contributing writers have good stuff in here also. I am too tired to go into more detail other than Chris has lots of views on religion in here. Interesting reading. (BC)

\$2.00 Chris Tery PO Box 4909 Richmond, VA 23220

Hanging Like a Hex #5

I have a few technical complaints about this zine: 1) it isn't stapled, 2) the editor misspells "its" constantly, 3) although the layout is very nicely done on a computer and a lot of time was obviously invested in it, there are simple editing and grammatical errors all over the place that could have been so easily corrected on a computer (spellcheck, for instance). This needs a fuckload more editing; occasionally the mistakes make it difficult to understand what is being said. That aside, this is a well done, well-rounded zine with decent interviews with Enkindel, Guilt, Kerosene

454, Damnation A.D., and Sensefield, a comics section, skating & scene info, and a cool art/photo piece at the end. This is probably much more than you'd expect from a free zine. Good job. (KB)

free [=stamps] / 615 2nd St. / Liverpool, NY 13088

I Sight #3

This girl loves her father and the rest of her family and it makes the poetry which covers the zine interesting to those filled with love. I on the other hand, hate my family and when I get out of jail for murdering my grandpa, old lady Grandma is getting hers! (BC)

\$=2 (send stamps?) Judith 1534 Bluemont ave. s.w. apt#120 Roanoke, VA 24015

Ideal Solution#2

Hey, lets go through a check list, ok? * letters section * columns * band interviews (jawbreaker, eagle bravo) * article on the republican conspiracy * music reviews * show reviews * zine reviews * top ten lists: yep just as suspected... your standard zine. (LM)

stamps; PO Box 5002; Cary, NC 27512

I'm Johnny and I don't #2

Johnny does the Aaron handwritten thing as he pulls us into his world story by story. People, this is a very good writer. Even though he is from Canada (I guess the beer and Hockey haven't gotten to him yet) he is an intelligent storyteller. After all these nice things I said about him, I hope he treats me to a Horton's donut eh? This is a must get zine. (BC)

\$2.00 Andy PO Box 21533 1850 Commercial drive. Vancouver, BC. Canada V5N 4A0

Institutionalized #1

Nothing new. (DS)

\$1.25; 923 E. 57th St. Indianapolis IN 46220

It's Alive #14

This is a hardcore zine with a sort of different approach than I've seen in other zines: it seems to try to meld together both older and newer bands and zines. Interspersed with the interviews (Mouthpiece and Slapshot) are band photo collages, quotes from old and new fanzines, and collages of old and new flyers. It sort of reminded me of this book I saw today that was comprised of interviews and thousands of flyers for shows and artwork accompanied by text. It was very cool to see the collages in It's Alive (the one on the back was especially interesting). Great idea but the rest of the content was a bit thin. (KB)

free [=stamps] / PO Box 6326 / Oxnard, CA 93031-6326

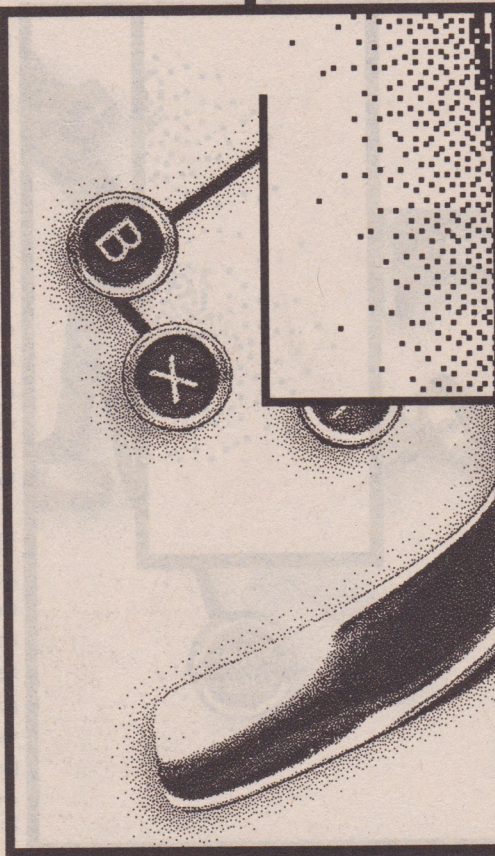
Junk #3

Cute quarter size zine with a penciled in color cover. It's got some comix on walmart (one of the guys works there) and great stories about Shirley temple puke. Despite the humor of this zine, the writer mentions having a wife, which I found odd for a punk rocker. I thought those brief mentions of matrimony were the most interesting parts and would like to read more on the rarity of punk rock marriage. (LM)

204 E. Morris #1; Modesto, CA 95354

Kemosabe #1

This is a standard zine with a personal feminist slant. However, Kara has let herself fall into a cliché, giving em the feeling that she is writing about things



that she doesn't care about. This could be very worthwhile if she let herself be passionate and honest. (LM)
stamps; Kara; 5725; Ottawa Ct. #1A; Mishawaka, IN 46545

The King of Persia (Book)

Not sure why we got this? Cartoon book that follows a little cute story that kinda seems pointless. This is a book not a zine. (EA)
Accordian Press

Knuckle Sandwich #1

Yet another great mini comic! The Klan Clowns are funny for all races. These comics are funny and I know funny. The only problem is the 1 dollar cover price. I want more for my bang if I am shelling out the green. Good job though. (BC)
\$1.00 or trade.. Anthony 2352 Nevin drive, Pittsburgh, PA. 15237

Make Room #8 / Enter Title Here Vol. 5, #1 Split

The Make Room half of this zine is top notch with a great interview with the Makers. Enter Title here has some reviews and great bad movie reviews. Together they make up about half a zine though. High quality but low quantity. Make it longer on both sides and I am hooked. (EA)
\$1.50 Make Room 3118 Keller, Temple, TX 76504

Mind Toilet

An almost impenetrable mess of graffiti, type, and photos. It makes your head hurt trying to read it and what you end up reading definitely isn't worth the effort. (DS)
PO Box 6132 NYC NY 11106

Muddle #9

An excellent issue of this up and coming zine, dedicated to everything that's punk and DIY, with columns by editors Dave Thirsty and Ron Richards, lots of great photos, and tons of interviews with really good bands: Lifetime, Down By Law, Promise Ring, Silent Majority, Project Kate, and more. The interviews start out silly ("name your favorite Star Wars character") but wind up surprisingly in-depth; Kate08 of Project Kate talks frankly about having a baby and trying to raise a child while keeping a band together, while Dave Smalley of Down By Law explains why he feels entitled to a beer nowadays after having helped start the Straight Edge movement. Reviews, Internet stuff, and lots more. (J.T.)
PO Box 621, Ithaca NY 14851, \$1

Naker Movie Stars

Text, text, text, pages and pages of print. How about some graphics, fellas? This thing is your usual post-adolescent ranting & raving - weird short stories, "The 3 Reasons Why I Am UnPunk," zine reviews, record reviews, and the usual "punk sucks" editorials. There are a couple of cartoons and some badly photocopied photos at the end. They're looking for scene reports (with pictures,) and anything to review (demo tapes, 7 inches, etc.) (J.T.)
8 Duxbury Way, Rochester NY 14618 \$1

No Labels-#3

What a snappy looking zine here. A full color cover with art by Gavin Oglesby, clean layouts and some decent writing and interviews. This issue has interviews with Snapcase, Civ, Coalesce and a rather interesting one with Gavin Oglesby. There are also the usual reviews and a free Vent 7" included. (BVH)
\$4 to: 1148 Fifth Ave. New York, NY 10128

Oculus Magazine vol V iss 3

Wow, the writing in this is very solid. Aside from the major label ads/reviews, there really isn't anything to complain about here. Articles on Kate Jacobs and The Wedding Present, excellent in-depth reviews, a very informative (but not dry) article on film-watching, and various other articles and columns. Very well done. (KB)
\$5 for 1-yr subscription [5 issues] / PO Box 148 / Hoboken, NJ 07030

Oculus Magazine-#4

Oculus is more of an indie rock style zine that always leaves me feeling a little unsatisfied when I'm finished with it. This zine still doesn't keep my interest. This issue seems to keep with the flow of things with Lars Vegas, Professor and Mary Ann and Lewis Warsh. (BVH)
\$1.00 to: PO Box 148 Hoboken, NJ 07030

One Quiet Voice #2

HEY, this is a free zine!!! Send for it today!!! Lots of long reviews on records, videos, zines, etc..etc.... It's free!!! (BC)
Free!!! One Quiet Voice PO Box 2172 Alameda, CA. 94501-0215

Paper, Rock, Scissors #1

A personal zine that was a slice of my life. The similarities of our mental life experience are scary, yet she describes hers so much more eloquently than I ever could. Also, includes an awkward Mary Lou Lord interview. (LM)
\$1; Tracy; 72 Mesonic St.; Northhampton, MA 01060

The Parital Truth #15

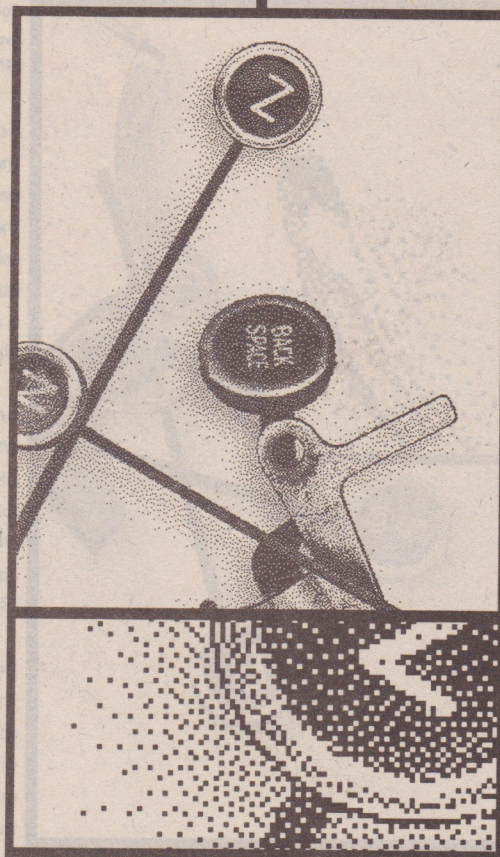
Nice little comic (a little short this issue). I have been reading this for a few issues and have enjoyed the teen emotion to it. Kinda sappy, but in a fun way if you like that sort of thing. I recommend that you send a handful of stamps and ask for the last few issues, if possible. (EA)
2 Stamps, The Partial Truth 1007 Callowhill St. Perkasio, PA 18944

Pheonix Zine #5

An interesting zine that combines a little bit of politics (not annoying overkill like most), some work stories, neat things found in the trash and everybody's favorite: COFFEE! A pretty good read. (WD)
PO Box 93174; Milwaukee, WI 53203

Prophet #3

First off, nice color photo on the cover. The layout in this is very clean and tidy and lacks the usual annoying unreadable typefaces that most computer-done zines have. 2 of the interviews in this (w/Chamberlain & Earth Crisis) are really long, informative, and well thought-out. The editor apparently knows the members of the bands he interviewed which always makes for the best interviews. The other int. with Damnation A.D. is also good though perhaps not as in-depth as the other 2 (this is not a criticism). The descriptive intros to the interviews and discography/reviews of the bands' releases give readers a pretty full view of each band and a great background for the actual conversation. You may be wondering why I'm only talking about the interviews: that's because aside from reviews,



they make up the entire content of the zine which is not at all deplorable when they are of this quality. (KB)

\$2 / Ryan Downey / PO Box 20386 / Indianapolis, IN 46205

Puddle of Cat #2

Anyone that feels the need to print tablature for Screeching Weasel songs has some pretty serious explaining to do. (DS)

\$1; 4908 Everett Rd. Muncie IN 47304

Punching Bag #1

If only aesthetics were everything. I love a good layout (hey I was on the yearbook staff in middleschool) and baby this zine has got it. Balance, originality, and beauty. Now if only the writing was up to par. Contains some article on how great Propagandhi is and 'bout trying to go vegetarian. (LM)

David; 2208 Mallard Ln SE; Decatur, AL 35601

Radio Free Suburbia #4

This is an all right zine with about what you'd expect. Stories about going to see shows. Articles on anarchy, and some other random stories thrown in. If I put this out I think I'd seriously question why I was putting so much money into this with apparently so little effort. It's all right, but reading it has put me in a bad mood. That's that. (WD)

\$1; RFS; 174 Meredith Ave.; Garrett Hill, PA 19010

Ripping Thrash #12

There are quite a few contributors to this, the 10th anniversary issue. It seems that everybody got a page to write a column or blurb on their projects ranging from zines to bands to distros. I'm not really sure how to judge this; it seems like more of an information-oriented zine than anything else. It's pretty good for that but at times was pretty dry and 1 half-size page from each contributor doesn't seem enough. (KB)

50P / Steve / PO Box 152 / Burton-on-Trent Staffs/ DE14 1XX / England

Rust-#4

Rust is a pretty cool zine from Seattle. Derek packs a lot of useful and entertaining crap into 44 pages here. This issue has interviews with Today is the Day, Sensefield and Both Worlds. There is also some cool articles which include how to set up shows and how to buy a guitar. Overall, it rocks. (BVH)

PO Box 2293 Seattle, WA. 98111

Sissy #2

Still the same great silly spoof on Sassy Magazine I can't help it, I just think it's great. Articles on DIY penis surgery, tooth dreams, and how the rave culture is just another tool of the man (always keepin' us down). Oh and the quiz is great too (I'm still not punk rock, damn!). (LM)

\$1; Kevin Hoffmann 111 Dallas Ave; Newark, DE 19711

Skaholic #4

Show reviews, record reviews, and other reviews. Monica talks about her relationship with Mike, and he discusses his with her. The relationship is over but can the friendship be saved. Will mike ever love again. Will

Monica be able to do the mash potato like she used to? Get this zine and get all the answers. As much as "ska sucks," this zine was all right. (BC)

1.00 Skaholic.o. Box 440381 Miami, FL 33144

Social Deviate #2

Da' good stuff... a non-band interview - rather a discussion with a really cool ex-boxer... a funny drug story. Y'know the kind a drunk punk would tell after many exclamations of "Dude!". Silly rock star rumors/stories like the kind you told in 6th grade and you cared so much about. No music reviews! Da' Bad stuff... newspaper clippings, poetry that is either really bad or some great spoof on emo and is still really bad. (LM)

stamps; David Farmer; 10220 Shoal Creek CT.; Louisville, KY 40291

Soy, not Oi!

A humorous and tasty approach to veganism that's fun, not preachy. It contains recipes (the curry is divine!) that have suggested listening (imagine making biscuits not bombs to final conflict, awesome!). Also has some personal essays by folks talking about why they are vegan. Even though it's ten years old, it's still a must for those thinking about becoming a vegetarian or vegan. Or if you're already vegan it has some vital nutritional info you may

not know. Be sure to pick it up. (LM)

Available through Profane Existence; POB 8722; Minneapolis, MN 55408

Something For Nothing #29

This is a pretty cool little zine. The layout is done really well, where every page has a slightly different feel to it. The content is pretty solid: a bunch of pretty good columns and some trip stories. The amount of text got a little to much for me after a while, but other than that this is a very nice zine (no surprise that it's up to #29...) (WD)

Idy; 516 Third St. NE; Massillo, OH 44646

Soundviews-#40

What? Soundviews has another issue out? Sure thing. Like my bills, this zine has an uncanny knack for punctuality. This issue contains interviews with John Joseph, The Templars, Devoid of Faith, Merauder and more. It also includes reviews, articles and gossip. (BVH)

\$2 to: 96 Henry St. Suite 5W Brooklyn, NY 11201-1713

Square Suckers #4

The first 3/4ths of this zine is like a disturbing personal journal with charcoal and sketches. It left me with an odd impression of death, drugs, and mass murder, even though it was about none of those things. The last quarter was about the germs. Maybe the two are connected? I don't know. (LM)

\$1; Kimberly Roberts; RTI Box 424; Unicoi, TN 37692

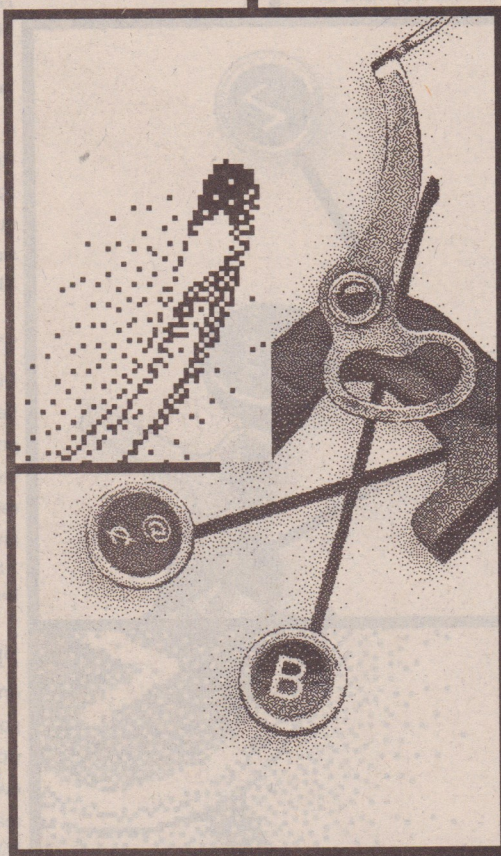
State #4

The interview with tattoo artist Mike Ski from PA was informative and well done and the layout is clean and pleasing to the eye but other than that, I wasn't too impressed. The quality of the writing is pretty mediocre and the questions in the interviews (with the Promise Ring, Abhinanda, and Merick) were generic. (KB)

PO Box 30374 / Indianapolis, IN 46230-0374

Station #1

Shit, this is a hell of a first issue. The poetic style of Vinita's column is beautiful (though some of the content was irritating), Greg's ideas and writing style are very thoughtful and unpretentious. Most of the interviews (with Ray Cappo, Age of Reason, Eve's Plum, Earth Crisis, Jay Bentley from Bad Religion, and



the Skavengers) are well-above the average: thought-provoking and mature. I'd like to see more writing though than interviews (particularly the throwaway ones with Eve's Plum and the Skavengers) in future issues. Sorry, but I didn't read the poetry. I just can't stomach the stuff. (KB)

\$1 / Greg Sviul / 2651 9th St. / Boulder, CO 80304

Stylus #8

I really liked the interview with the band Pilot, who talk about signing to a major label and quickly getting dropped. It's a fate that befalls all too many bands these days but every few of them ever wind up sharing this valuable learning experience in interviews. Other features in this half-legal sized zine include an interview with Ovarian Trolley and an article about square dancing, plus some reviews. (J.T.)

10711 NE 198th St., Bothell WA 98011, \$1

Suburban Home-#5

This is a pretty cool zine from Boulder, Co. that covers the local punk scene. This issue has interviews with 30 Foot Fall and Down By Law plus tons of columns and articles. Not bad for a locally free zine. The only problem is the layouts are a little dark sometimes and it makes the text hard to read. (BVH)

\$0.75 to: 1750 30th St. #365 Boulder, Co. 80301

Ten Things Jesus Wants you to Know #14

This is a classic zine all the way. Ten Things has been around and only gets better. Great layouts and decent interviews. The Motards and the Statics are great interviews. In the garage/Estrus vein, you should pick it up. It is big, full of reviews (they are mostly worth reading) and has a nice layout. (EA)

\$2.00 1407 NE 45th Street #17, Seattle, WA 98105

Top Hat #18

Reviews of music, shows and of all things the Edgefest featuring bands like No Doubt, Goldfinger and Candlebox. Not a bad read, the item on porno was funny. Nothing special, but a nice layout with thought. Pricey, at \$2.50. (EA)

\$2.50 PO Box 24001, Edina, MN 55424

Trippa Shake #5

This one is in French I believe. No help from me. Maybe it is in Italian. Looks interesting though.

Reviews and all that stuff as far as I can tell. (EA)

(\$3.00 Trippa Shake c/o Ballini Stefano, VIA MOCALE, 79-50028, Tavarnelee V.P.)

Upstate #7

Wholly god. The "new typography" revolution has finally trickled down to the fanzine world. Things will never be the same. You have to give these people credit for pulling a project like this off (it's the best print quality I've ever seen in a fanzine), however their typographic & design pyrotechnics oftentimes blow up in their face especially with darks bleeding out too much, obscuring the article on top. All in all, it's a nice place to visit, but I wouldn't want to live there. (DS)

\$2; 283 Betsinger Road Sherrill, New York 13461-1208

Verboslammed #8

A very thoughtful and thought provoking look on body image from many different view points (ages 14-72). Being a feminist zine it focused only on women, but I think body image from guys point of view would have been interesting and relevant. That aside it is a very worthwhile issue that let me work out some personal problems with body image and self hate. (LM)

\$1 and 2 stamps; POB 1113; Portland, OR 97207-1113

War Crime #1

OK, this is a first issue but I still have to say this is terrible. The writing is very poor and off-the-top-of-the-head, the questions in the interviews (w/Inquisition and Code 13) are of the "any interesting tour stories" variety. There are articles on Food Not Bombs, Vegan Beer, and Chiapas and book reviews. (KB)

\$1 / 4348 E. 15th St. / Tucson, AZ 85711

Wax Museum #2

A digest-sized zine that covers anything and everything that interests the editors. For the most part, that's not punk rock: video/movie and book reviews, indie-rock record reviews (Rodan, Retsin, Sonora Pine, King Kong, Wesley Willis, etc.), The Prisoner TV show, zine reviews, and some technical piece about some sort of audio device that connects to your phone that I couldn't figure out. I admire the eclecticism but quite frankly I didn't find this terribly interesting and with the tiny tip and odd fonts, difficult to slog through. (J.T.)

909 McCoy Creek Ct., Suisun CA 94585, \$2

What's Going on in My Pants? #4

Oh my. This guy is 18 but sounds like he's 14. The interviews (w/Plow United, Man Afraid, Despise You, Showcase Showdown, Spazz, and Suppression) are all 1-2 pagers and generic, the cartoons are stupid, and the writing is extremely juvenile and overly judgmental. I'm so sick of this punk police/dogmatic shit and if I hear one more "corporate Epitaph" reference, I'm going to throw up. The only saving grace is the piece about his grandmother dying which makes me feel sort of bad for giving this bad review but hey, I gotta be honest. (KB)

free [=stamps] / 488 Green Bay Rd. / Highland Park, IL 60035

What's the Point? #1

I'm not sure what to make of this... "What's the Point is the magazine for your generation. As its publishers, we will struggle to ensure it grows and develops as you do." Something is very strange about this magazine. Which is not to say that it's not any good, there are some really great articles in here all dealing loosely with the theme of "generation gap." There's just something very off-putting about this whole thing. (DS)

\$1.95 244 Worcester Road Hollis New Hampshire 03049

WOTW (Writing on the Wall) #1?

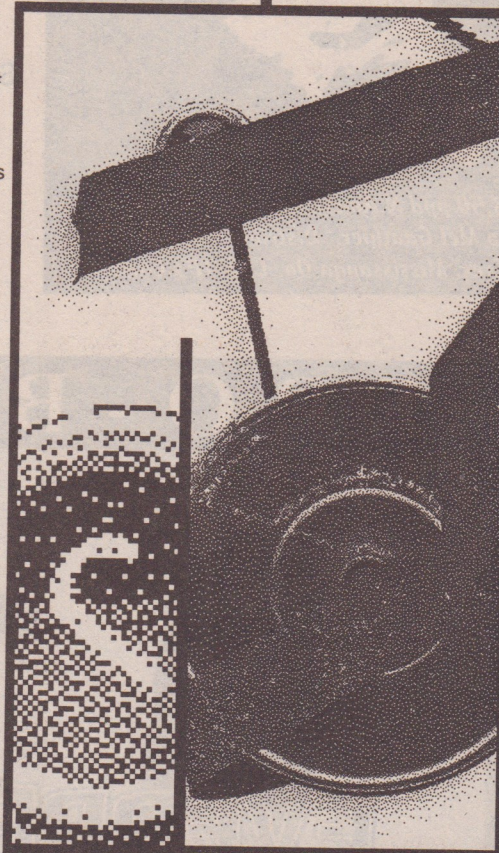
A rip off zine of tagging. Just poorly reproduced Xerox's of walls and tags. A big rip-off at \$3, the author claims it is because of the high price of film and such. Most of the pictures could have been hand drawn though. Sorry, avoid. (EA)

(\$3.00 Unseen Press PO Box 23 Valhalla, NY 10595)

Zoo Zine#4

A short read here. Rants about Green Day (like they need more press), raves about animal safety, and a little more. there is an ad for the Church of the Sub-genius, so you know this boy has to be weird. The explanation of his new address scares me about how much free time lil' Bri-guy has. (BC)

(\$1.00. BriAn Zoo 110 N. Valley View rd. Sioux Falls, SD. 57107) ©



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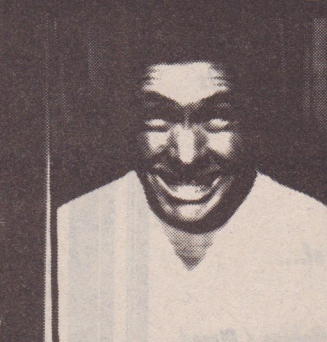
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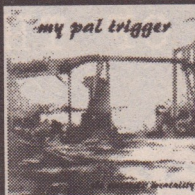
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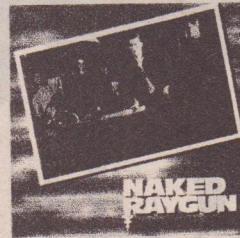


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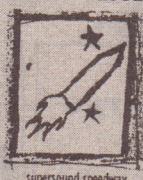
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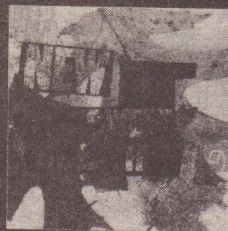
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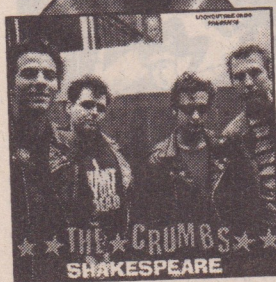
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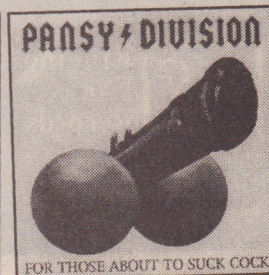
the Hi-Fives- "It's Up To You" b/w
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Squirtgun- "Mary Ann"
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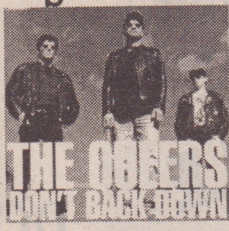


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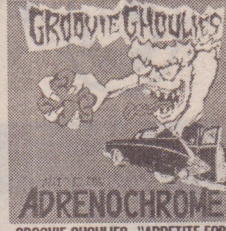
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